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Schooling and Life Projects

– Experiences and Perspectives of Migrant and

Minority Ethnic Youth in England and Spain

by

Clara Helene Rübner Jørgensen

**A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the
requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

**Centre for Research in Ethnic Relations, School of Health and Social Studies
University of Warwick**

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List of abbreviations

EAL	English as Additional Language
ESO	Educación Secundaria Obligatoria (Compulsory Secondary Education)
GCSE	General Certificate of Secondary Education
PE	Physical Education
RE	Religious Education
UK	United Kingdom
US	United States

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The thesis is dedicated to my beautiful daughter, Naomi, who was born while I was in the process of writing it and who herself is an outcome of migration and intercultural dialogue.

Declaration

I, Clara Rübner Jørgensen, declare that this thesis is my own work and that it has not been submitted for any other degree at another university.

Date:**Signed:**

Abstract

This thesis is a discussion of the way young people of migrant and minority ethnic background experience schooling and plan for their futures within two different national contexts – England and Spain. It is based on a comparative and ethnographic fieldwork which I carried out in Birmingham and Madrid over the course of 14 months in 2007-2009. As part of the research, I did participant observation in a school in each city and interviewed a total of 54 young people. The thesis presents how they described their life at school, their plans and wishes for the future, and the influences which they considered important to their schooling and future lives.

The education of migrant and minority ethnic groups is a topic that increasingly appears in public and political debates in Europe. Reports and research often describe education as crucial to socio-economic well-being and empowerment, but they also show a tendency among migrant and minority ethnic groups to be disadvantaged in terms of education. The literature presents a number of ways to understand this phenomenon and shows that schooling is affected by many complex and interlinking issues. Comparative research has good potential for exploring these complexities, but there is a gap within the existing comparative literature. Most comparative studies of migrant and minority ethnic youth in education are quantitative and analyse the situation of either large categories of young people or distinct ethnic or national groups. Furthermore, these studies focus almost exclusively on achievement and attainment. Thus, there is a lack of qualitative comparative research, which explores how young people from a variety of ethnic or national backgrounds experience schooling and plan for their future, and which discusses their experiences from a more holistic and contextual perspective.

In this thesis I respond to this gap. I analyse the experiences of young people from a mixture of ethnic and national backgrounds. The data has been collected using qualitative ethnographic research methods. Finally, the findings are shaped by my informants' narratives and perceptions and this has given the thesis a broader perspective than the traditional focus on achievement and attainment.

The main findings arising from the data was the importance of social relations in influencing young people's schooling experiences and life projects. Friends and family were described as particularly influential in providing support and socio-emotional well-being. In the thesis I analyse these findings through the lens of social capital. I argue that socio-emotional well-being should be considered a resource in itself and included in social capital theory. However, the analysis also shows that young people of migrant and minority ethnic origin do not all have the same conditions for accessing this 'resource of well-being'. The thesis therefore concludes with a number of practical recommendations, aimed to improve the inclusion and general well-being of migrant and minority ethnic youth in schools.

Introduction

This thesis is a discussion of the way young people of migrant and minority ethnic background experience schooling and plan for their futures within two different national contexts – England and Spain. It is based on a comparative and ethnographic fieldwork which I carried out in Birmingham and Madrid over the course of 14 months in 2007-2009. As part of the research, I did participant observation in a school in each city and interviewed a total of 54 young people. The thesis presents how they described their life at school, their plans and wishes for the future, and the influences which they considered important to their schooling and future lives.

My motivation for carrying out the research results from a number of observations and interests. First of all, the education of migrants and minority ethnic groups is a topic that increasingly appears in public and political debates in Europe. The role of schools in transmitting ‘common national values’ is frequently discussed, and the degree to which they should pay attention to diversity and ‘cultural practices’ of minority ethnic groups is often a cause of controversy (e.g. Andalo 2007a; Brems 2006; Haas 2008; Henley 2004; Taylor 2006; Vertovec and Wessendorf 2004; 2009). The tendency of migrants and minorities to be concentrated in particular schools is similarly an area of concern in many countries, and one which is dealt with differently (e.g. Andalo 2007b; De B. 2011; Heckmann 2008a: 18-20). Finally, the question of how to practically incorporate migrants and minority ethnic students in school and ensure equal opportunities for all is frequently discussed by educationalists, practitioners and decision-makers (e.g. Crul and Schneider 2009; Permisán and Fernández 2007; Tomlinson 2008). In these debates, the voices of young people from migrant and minority ethnic backgrounds are however often missing. Therefore this thesis is aimed to explore how young people themselves experience schooling within the framework of different national contexts and

discourses.

Secondly, as often pointed out in research and policy papers, education is crucial to socio-economic well-being and empowerment of migrant and minority ethnic groups (e.g. Stanat and Christensen 2006: 16; Levels and Dronkers 2008: 1405). The disadvantageous situation of many of these groups within European educational systems is therefore an area of importance and concern (e.g. Aparicio 2007; Gillborn and Mirza 2000; Nusche 2009). The literature presents a number of ways to understand this phenomenon. Scholars have analysed the effects of the social and cultural background of the students (e.g. Abajo and Carrasco 2004; Brice Heath 1982; Mocombe 2006), the role of their social networks (Carbonaro 2004; Ream and Rumberger 2009; Ryabov 2008), the effects of the schooling environment (e.g. Coard 1971; Carrington 1983; Gillborn 1997a) and the influence of the surrounding society (e.g. Ogbu 1978; 1990; Portes and Zhou 1993). Comparative research has furthermore identified considerable differences between countries in terms of how migrants and minority ethnic groups perform in school (Heckmann 2008a; 2008b; Stanat and Christensen 2006) and highlighted the role of the national school systems and modes of integration (Crul 2007; Heckmann *et al.* 2001; Nusche 2009).

The many factors identified by research as having an effect on migrants and minority ethnic groups in school, makes it particularly important to explore how young people from these groups understand their own schooling situation and what they think can be done to improve it. Thus, rather than confirming or rejecting existing theories of the effects of home-school differences, institutional racism, or societal discrimination, the aim of this research is to explore the factors that young people themselves see as the most important. The research design has enabled the young people, who participated in the study, to freely identify influences that they think have an effect on their schooling

and future lives. As I will go on to show, this has added an extra dimension to existing explanatory models and brought up a number of new and important insights.

Finally, the research was motivated by a gap in the comparative literature on migrants and minority ethnic youth in education. Most comparative research into this topic is quantitative and analyses the situation of either large categories, such as ‘natives’, 1st generation, and 2nd generation migrants as used in the PISA surveys¹, or distinct ethnic or national groups, e.g. descendants of immigrants from Turkey, Ex-Yugoslavia, and Morocco, as used in the TIES project². Furthermore, comparative research focuses almost exclusively on achievement and attainment (e.g. Crul and Schneider 2009; Heckmann 2008a/b; Nusche 2009; Schleicher 2006; Stanat and Christensen 2006). Thus, there is a lack of qualitative comparative research, which explores how young people, from a variety of ethnic or national backgrounds, experience schooling and plan for their future, and which discusses their experiences from a more holistic and contextual perspective.

In this thesis I respond to this gap. First of all, I analyse the experiences of young people from a mixture of ethnic and national backgrounds. Secondly, the data has been collected using qualitative ethnographic research methods. Finally, the findings are shaped by my informants’ narratives and perceptions and this has given the thesis a broader perspective than the traditional focus on achievement and attainment. The use of ethnographic research methods has furthermore enabled me to collect a different type of comparative data than most conventional research. As the analysis will show, my study not only identifies similarities and differences in the way that the young people talked

¹ The Programme for International Student Assessment:
http://www.pisa.oecd.org/pages/0,2987,en_32252351_32235731_1_1_1_1_1_1_1,00.html
(last accessed 16/02-11)

²The Integration of European Second Generation, <http://www.tiesproject.eu/index.php?lang=en>,
(last accessed 16/02-11)

about common topics. It also brings to the fore issues which young people in one context considered important but did not even mention in the other. This is important when trying to understand the impact of a specific local research context and is furthermore a particular strength when developing practical recommendations.

One of the challenges of comparative research is to choose the specific contexts to study (Hahn 2006: 144). Birmingham and Madrid were chosen as the basis for this research for a number of reasons. First of all, both cities are relatively large and have a considerable migrant and minority ethnic population. Both are also situated within countries with a colonial history and a significant proportion of their migrant populations have come from former colonies. Many of them have therefore also been familiar with the language prior to migration. Within both contexts this has created a distinction between migrant students from former colonies, who know the language upon arrival, and migrant students from other countries, who usually do not.

The two localities do however have very different migration histories. Whereas large scale migration into Britain is most often considered a phenomenon which began after the Second World War (Mason 2000: 19-23), Spain is one of the 'new immigration countries' of Europe and has only experienced significant immigration within the last 15-20 years (Arango s.a.: 3). Due to this difference, England has a longer tradition of dealing with ethnic diversity, and this is evident in its educational approach to minority ethnic groups. Thus, carrying out a comparative study within schools in these two localities, presents a good deal of potential for exploring the educational experiences of migrants and minority ethnic groups within different local and national contexts.

Another significant challenge when conducting comparative research is the frequent variation in terminology in the respective research countries (Mangen 1999:112; Quilgars *et al.* 2009), which makes it difficult to select research participants and

compare results. England and Spain represent a clear example of this situation, due to the different ways in which migrant and minority ethnic groups are categorised within the two countries. In Spain, the terms most commonly used to describe the migrant population are *extranjeros* (foreigners) and *inmigrantes* (immigrants). The first term ‘foreigner’ is a legal term and includes all people who do not have a Spanish citizenship. When immigrants obtain Spanish citizenship they therefore no longer figure as foreigners in Spanish statistics. The second term ‘immigrant’ is not a legal term, but describes people who have been born abroad and come to live in Spain (Colectivo IOÉ 2005:34). Both groups thus include people from a variety of national, social and economic groups, and they may overlap. In addition, in practice the two terms are often used interchangeably, even though there are some important legal differences between them.

Contrary to Spain, the terminology in England usually focuses on ethnicity rather than on nationality or migration status (Strelitz 2004: 1-2). The terms most commonly used are ‘ethnic minorities’ or ‘minority ethnic groups’ and these groups are further divided into sub-groups according to ethnicity. ‘Minority ethnic groups’ may thus include people from different migratory generations, which can differ in terms of language, attachment to their country of origin, and legal status.

All three groups, ‘immigrants’, ‘foreigners’ or ‘minority ethnic groups’ are very diverse and making such groups the focus of research cannot avoid overlooking important internal differences. The alternative - singling out one specific national or minority ethnic group for research - can however make it difficult to see what is particular to the group and what it may share with other groups. And both options do not enable the researcher to identify possible similarities between migrants, minority ethnic

groups and people with no immigrant or minority ethnic background on the basis of other characteristics, e.g. age or gender.

Based on this rationale, the young people who participated in this research project were recruited from a number of different groups and included migrants³, minority ethnic youth, and young people who were neither migrants nor from a minority ethnic background. Having such a mixed group of young people as the basis of the research enabled me to explore differences and similarities between and within groups, and to acknowledge both diversity and potentially common experiences. Because of the diversity of the informants, the thesis does not aim to make any broad generalisations in terms of ethnicity, migration status or other background characteristics. Therefore, the analysis and conclusions should not be seen as a standard group-comparison of the way that certain ethnic or national groups experience schooling and perceive their future lives. Rather, it is a discussion of issues, which were presented as important by the young people participating in my study. While some of them relate to the ethnicity or background of the students, others should be understood in terms of personal backgrounds and trajectories, and their common experiences as young people. In this thesis I aim to find a balance between the inter-ethnic and the ethnic, acknowledging both the experiences and needs that young people of migrant or minority ethnic background have due to their ethnicity or migration status, and the ones they have because they are 'just young'.

³Due to the often rather negative connotations related to the term *immigrant*, in this thesis I have chosen to use the more neutral term *migrant* to describe individuals, who themselves have undergone a process of migration. I am conscious that this terminology does not take into consideration the difference between economic migrants and refugees even though their projects in the country of settlement may be significantly different (Joly 2002). Due to the limited data on the young people in this study's reasons for migration I am, however, not able to make this comparison in my analysis. Young people, who have been born in England or Spain of migrant parents or grandparents, will be referred to as *minority ethnic youth*.

Content of the Thesis

The thesis is divided into two parts and a conclusion. Part one contains chapter 1-3 and describes the background of the research. Chapter 1 reviews the main anthropological and sociological approaches to education and schooling. It looks at different theories regarding educational inequality, and discusses them in relation to the existing literature and research on migrant and minority ethnic groups in schools. It furthermore identifies a number of gaps in the literature, which are addressed in the thesis. Chapter 2 discusses the methodology of the project. It describes the background for the choice of methods and the ethical procedures followed. In addition, the chapter shows how the methods were applied in the two contexts, considers issues of reflexivity and sets the background for the data analysis. Chapter 3 describes the national and local contexts of the research. By comparing the various levels, it provides a background for understanding each fieldwork on its own, as well as the relation and comparison between them.

Part two contains chapter 4-6 and presents the analysis of the data. Chapter 4 looks at the schooling experiences of the young people in Birmingham and Madrid and discusses the influences, which they consider important. Chapter 5 focuses on their plans, hopes, expectations and aspirations for the future and similarly analyses the influences which they see as important for their future lives. Chapter 6 sums up the different points made in chapter four and five, and compares the way the young people experience schooling and plan for their futures in the two national, urban and local contexts. The chapter links their experiences to the theoretical framework set out in chapter 1 and discusses their practical implications.

Finally, the conclusion sums up the main differences and similarities found in the data and presents a number of practical recommendations derived from the research.

Part I: Background

Chapter 1: Literature review

Education, schooling, and educational inequality has been approached from a number of angles within social science, and the literature dealing specifically with migrants and minority ethnic youth is extensive. In this chapter I have grouped this broad field of research into five main strands. These are reviewed and discussed, showing how they have inspired the research and formed the background for the analysis, and how they present a number of gaps, which will be addressed in subsequent chapters.

The first approach consists of research that takes its point of departure from class analysis and the concept of *cultural capital*. This concept was developed by the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu to explain the reproduction of social class inequality within education but has, as will be discussed, also been used in studies of migrants and minority ethnic youth. The second approach includes issues of culture and ethnicity more directly and focuses mainly on the ways in which differences between the home of migrant or minority ethnic students and the school affect learning and educational outcomes. The third approach looks at educational performance as a result of social interactions and networks and uses the concept of *social capital* and related concepts (such as peer social capital) to explain differences. The fourth approach, examines the role of the schools. It looks at the effect of different educational systems and at the interactions within schools, mainly between students and teachers. Finally, a fifth approach includes the surrounding society in the analysis and argues that the way in which young people are positioned and position themselves within society can have an effect on schooling and educational aspirations.

In practice there is, of course, some overlap between these different strands of research, and several researchers do acknowledge the importance of multiple influences in their work. The following approaches should therefore not be seen as mutually exclusive.

Still, the degree to which various theoretical and empirical work focus on one or the other makes the categorisation a useful analytical framework.

1.1. Class and Cultural Capital

In the late 1960s and 1970s, educational researchers became increasingly preoccupied with issues of educational inequality and differences of opportunity (Hallinan 2000:7). Critical scholars began to reject the view that schools were *innocent sites of cultural transmission* (Levinson and Holland 1996:5) and instead they argued that the material taught in school, and the way it was taught, was a product of very specific value-systems or communication patterns, prevalent among the dominant classes and groups in the society. Schooling was not a neutral process, in which all children had the same chances of succeeding. Rather than promoting equality of opportunity, schools could, in fact, risk reproducing inequalities and social hierarchies. The idea of meritocracy was increasingly criticised and success in school was seen as something that was connected to broader inequalities in the society rather than to individual capacity (e.g. Bourdieu and Passeron 1977; Bowles and Gintis 1976).

This theme was explored by Bourdieu who in his critical analysis of the French educational system used the concept of *cultural capital* to explain variations between children of different social classes. Cultural capital is a person's *culture, cultivation, Bildung* (Bourdieu 1986:244), or in other words, his or her understanding of the dominant culture of a society. It can appear as objectified (as items which show the cultural status of the owner) or institutional (in the form of diplomas or certificates), but most often it is embodied and an integrated part of the person to whom it belongs. A person can acquire cultural capital throughout life by means of education, but not all individuals have the same possibilities to do so and there is an important link between the wealth of a family (its economic capital) and the acquisition of cultural capital (ibid:246-48). This is mainly

because the time a family can spend on cultural capital transmission depends on the amount of free time that they can afford to have.

The unequal amount of cultural capital possessed by families from different classes, however, also creates unequal conditions for their children's acquisition of cultural capital, since parents from the 'dominant classes' provide their children with an initial advantage through their own cultural capital. The knowledge which is transmitted in schools often reflects the cultural capital and values of the dominant classes, and thus it is easier for children, who already possess a certain amount of this knowledge to succeed educationally (Ibid:244-246). The effect of this process is, however, concealed since the knowledge that is transmitted in schools is often perceived as neutral and equally accessible to children from all social classes. The way in which such inequalities remain hidden, unrecognized and thereby legitimized, is, according to Bourdieu, an act of *symbolic violence* (Bourdieu and Passeron 1977:67).

The concept of cultural capital as developed by Bourdieu mainly relates to class. As illustrated by Rollock (2007) it can, however, also be used to explain ethnic inequalities. In her article on school staffs' views on black male students in the UK, she shows that teachers have certain perceptions of what constitutes cultural capital in the school context, and that black students are often disadvantaged in this equation. This, she argues, negatively affects their school performance and prevents them from attaining success. Rollock's article thus points out the importance of acknowledging the existence of specific value-systems in school, and of considering what is considered legitimate knowledge, when working in the field of education and ethnicity.

Another dimension of cultural capital - parents' social class and educational level - is also often used to explain different school outcomes of migrants and minority ethnic groups. In a study of Moroccan and Dominican migrants in Spain, Pereda *et al.* (2003a)

show that young people with a professionally qualified father or mother are twice as likely to continue studying than young people without a professionally qualified parent. Along a similar line, Heckmann (2008b) explains low achievement among migrant families as being partly due to the low levels of education within the families and their consequently limited cultural capital. He does, however, also mention the important point that the migration process devalues the cultural capital that migrant families do possess, both because they can be disadvantaged in terms of language, but also because their knowledge and experiences of employment and educational institutions may not be of value in their new country of residence (p.27).

Finally, large comparative studies, such as the PISA surveys also show a link between parental education, socio-economic status and educational outcomes of migrant students. Nevertheless, as pointed out in a special publication on where immigrant students succeed, the parental education and socio-economic status of parents alone cannot account for the gaps found in many countries between immigrant and native students, and some performance differences are specifically related to the migration status of the students (Stanat and Christensen 2006:69). In addition, the socio-economic or class status of migrant parents in the country of residence may not always reflect their class status prior to migration, as a number of factors, such as the jobs available to migrants in the country of reception, their gender and their legal status, affect the class position, which they are given (Gibney and Hansen 2005:98). Both points illustrate some of the shortfalls of using class-analysis in studies of migrant youth and of applying generalizations across large groups or countries.

A number of critiques have been made of Bourdieu and his cultural capital theory. It has been pointed out that it contains very little consideration of intra-group differences and agency. Individuals are mainly presented as passive carriers of roles (Jenkins 1992:91) and

the rather deterministic view on social reproduction leaves very little room for potential upwards mobility (Goldthorpe 2007:11-16). This is problematic because there is not always a direct connection between class and educational engagement or success, perhaps especially when studying minority ethnic groups. As pointed out by Haque (2000), “we cannot assume that limited parental education amongst parents of ethnic minority origin connotes low aspirations for their children’s educational success” (p.154). Similarly, Francis and Archer (2005) challenge Bourdieu in their discussion of British-Chinese parents and pupils and their views on education. They show that even though most of the parents in their study came from impoverished peasant backgrounds, they still placed a very high value on education. While parents often lacked the resources, traditionally considered as constituting cultural capital, they used an “ethnically-specific construction of identity as an alternative resource of cultural capital”. Their children largely succeeded in achieving educational success and Francis and Archer therefore question the applicability of a Bourdieurian analysis of ‘non-Western’ groups (p.105).

The concept of class, which is the basis of Bourdieu’s analysis, is furthermore highly complex and may not apply equally to minority ethnic groups or affect them in the same way. In a discussion of educational outcomes of children, based on ethnicity, social class, and gender in the UK, Demack *et al.* (2000), show that while social class has an important impact on school performance, it influences different ethnic groups in different ways. Class background is, for example, more closely related to achievement of students from Indian and white backgrounds than among black students (p.134-135). Gillborn and Mirza (2000) similarly discuss achievement in relation to ethnicity, class, and gender and conclude that “ethnic inequalities persist even when class differences are taken into account”. Therefore they argue that while targeting class disadvantage is highly important, such actions alone may have a limited effect in closing the gap between particular ethnic groups (p.21).

Finally, in the Spanish context, Enguita *et al.* (2010) have noted that class alone cannot account for differences between Spanish and immigrant students, and that three additional factors should be taken into consideration: the migrants' experience of migration with its personal costs and cultural relocation and disorientation, language, and the educational processes in their country of origin (p.84-85). As these examples illustrate, it is important, when studying the educational situation of minority ethnic groups, to take into consideration intra-group differences and 'atypical' behaviour, as well as the different and complex ways in which class interact with other sources of stratification, such as 'race' or ethnicity.

1.2. 'Cultural' Home/School Differences

The critical approaches to schooling which developed in the United States in the 1960s and 1970s were closely connected to the Civil Rights movement. Therefore several American educational scholars of that period focused on the unequal educational experiences of minority and immigrant groups and the effects of interactional, linguistic and cognitive differences between 'Anglo-cultures' and 'Minority cultures' (Jacob and Jordan 1987:259; Levinson and Holland 1996:7-8). A central theme in this research was the relation between patterns prevalent in the home or family of the students and patterns prevalent in the school. In this way, the approach was similar to the one taken by Bourdieu, but the differences between children were understood in terms of culture or 'race', rather than class.

A study by Brice Heath (1982) represents an example of this approach. In her article on the effects of black and white language patterns in the US, she shows that the white teachers in her study generally had very different ways of asking questions than black parents. Being more familiar with their parents' style of communication, black children had

more difficulty recognizing this type of questioning and had also consequently difficulties in answering. This, she argues, led the teachers to conclude that the black children were less bright and not able to answer even the simplest questions.

In a more recent article by Mocombe (2006), language patterns also play an important role, albeit in a slightly different way. Mocombe argues that the educational failure of black youth in the US is a socio-linguistic problem, and that black children fail in school to a higher extent than their white or Asian counterparts, because they are socialized into a *sociolinguistic status group* (the black underclass) which fosters a *deep linguistic structure*. The difference between this structure and the Standard English used in the institutional context of the school is, he argues, the main reason for black failure to achieve. Mocombe thus presents an argument similar to that of the British sociologist Basil Bernstein, who in a series of articles showed that different social classes make use of different linguistic codes (1960; 1981) and that the linguistic codes used by the middle class are more compatible with those of the school (1971). Mocombe, however, adds an extra dimension to this argument by combining class and race theory and by looking at the way that the two together impact on language use and schooling.

Language and its effect on the education of migrants and minority ethnic groups is also analysed in international research, but these studies predominantly look at students who speak a different language than the language of instruction. Large scale studies have explored the link between the achievement attained by students and the language spoken in their homes. While it has been shown that the issue of language has an effect on schooling, different countries experience the effects to different degrees (e.g. Entorf and Minoiu 2004:9-10; Stanat and Christensen 2006:46-48) Home-school differences are, however, not only a matter of language and European research particularly, has added to this body of

research by looking at the cultural values and behaviour of the family and their effect on schooling.

In a study of British Asian girls in secondary school, Ghuman (2001) argue that girls of Pakistani and Bangladeshi origin are likely to face more difficulties at school because of the differing gender expectations existing in the home, at the school, and in the wider British society. Along a similar line, Abajo and Carrasco (2004) describe that there can be differences in the value attached by the Roma community and the schools in Spain and that this can make Roma youth experience internal contradictions and even, in some cases, lead to them dropping out (p.123). Their study, however, also shows that these potential value-differences are only part of the story and that a number of additional factors, such as socio-economic status, social marginalisation, and the degree of segregation at school, are related to the performance of Roma students in Spanish schools.

When analysing the effect of cultural differences on schooling, it is furthermore important not to assume that coming from a minority ethnic community automatically causes poor performance. As discussed by Nehaul (1999) many minority ethnic families actively promote their children's education and the home environment is often a source of support. Furthermore, external factors may play a role in the educational strategies of minority ethnic families. Ahmad (2001), for example, shows how parents of Muslim South Asian women encourage their girls to continue into post-compulsory education, due to the racism they may face in the labour market and the insecurity of matrimony. This, she points out, argues against theory, which sees the religio-cultural norms as something in opposition to educational attainment. As both examples show, it is thus important not to essentialise the cultures of minority ethnic groups and to acknowledge overlapping, complex or common cultural patterns between the school and the home. In addition, the studies emphasise the need to understand the more specific relations between young people from

minority ethnic backgrounds and their families, and the ways these shape educational conditions or strategies.

1. 3. Social Relations and Social Capital

The impact of social relations between people are often conceptualised within the theory of social capital, and social capital theory has had important implications for the study of education. Whereas studies of the effect of the home environment often focus on family characteristics such as occupation, income and educational level of parents, social capital theory argues that the *type* of social relations within the family, particularly between parents and children, also has an important effect on education.

Social capital is a concept which is usually connected to three main theorists: Pierre Bourdieu, the North American sociologist James Coleman, and the North American political scientist Robert Putnam. In spite of a number of similarities, these three theorists approach the concept from rather different angles, and the one who discusses social capital most directly in relation to education is Coleman. All three variations of the social capital concept, however, include important points for the study of education and minority ethnic groups.

Bourdieu defines social capital as the actual or potential resources, which are linked to being part of a network. The amount of social capital that an individual possesses is, thus, related to the size of the networks he or she can mobilize and to the volume of the capital, which each of the people he is connected to, possesses (Bourdieu 1986:248-249). Similar to his discussion of cultural capital, Bourdieu's work on social capital focuses on its unequal distribution and the way in which social capital works to maintain existing hierarchies. Hence, Bourdieu mainly conceptualizes social capital in terms of social reproduction and symbolic power (Dika and Singh 2002: 33).

Similar to Bourdieu, Coleman defines social capital as a particular kind of resource available to an actor, because of his or her attachment to a network. The availability of the resource inheres in the structure of relations between actors and would not be accessible if these relations were missing (Coleman 1988:98). In his discussion of education, Coleman specifically focuses on social relations between children and parents. Commenting on the way family background is often used to explain educational achievement, he argues that family background consists of three different types of capital: financial, human, and social.

Financial capital is the wealth or income of the family and *human capital* is the educational level of parents⁴. *Social capital*, however, depends on the physical presence of adults in the family and on the time and energy that families spend on their children's education. This specific type of capital is, according to Coleman, a crucial part of educational achievement and he argues that, "human capital may be irrelevant to outcomes for children if parents are not an important part of their children's lives.... if the human capital possessed by parents is not complemented by social capital embodied in family relations, it is irrelevant to the child's educational growth that the parent has a great deal, or a small amount, of human capital" (ibid:110). In families with only one parent or with a high number of siblings, social capital is, according to Coleman, limited or diluted, and this has a negative influence on the education of children (ibid:111-112).

The importance of social capital in acquiring educational credentials is also recognized by Putnam. He defines social capital as the effect of social networks and their associated norms of reciprocity and trust, and argues that both social networks within schools (social capital *inside the walls*) and social networks linking schools to the broader community

⁴ Human capital and cultural capital are similar in the way that they are often both measured by educational level. There is, however, an important distinction between the two, because cultural capital includes both educational credentials and the more intangible complex of values and knowledge of cultural forms (Portes 2000:2). In this thesis the two terms will be applied according to the original use of the writers referred to. When used by me, human capital is to be understood as educational level alone and cultural capital as the more broad cultural knowledge and understanding, including language abilities.

(social capital *outside the walls*) are important to the educational process (Putnam 2004:3-4). Education is, however, only part of his interest in social capital and in his main work, the widely cited book *Bowling Alone* (Putnam 2001), he discusses a range of expressions of social capital and the way in which they, in his opinion, have declined in the US context. Whereas Bourdieu and Coleman analyse social capital as a characteristic of individuals, Putnam's main interest is, thus, in the social capital of communities (Morrow 1999:749). He furthermore acknowledges both positive and negative aspects of social capital and argues that while networks are generally good for those inside the community, they may have rather negative consequences for those outside. Therefore he asks the important question "how the positive consequences of social capital – mutual support, cooperation, trust, institutional effectiveness – can be maximized and the negative manifestations – sectarianism, ethnocentrism, corruption – minimised?" (Putnam 2001:22)

In the discussion of this question, Putnam distinguishes between two types of social capital: *bridging* and *bonding*, the former referring to networks that cross groups and the latter to those that stay within the boundaries of homogenous groups. Both types can have "powerfully positive social effects" but according to Putnam bridging social capital generally creates broader identities and reciprocity, whereas bonding social capital reinforces our narrower selves. Bonding social capital may be enough for "getting by," but bridging social capital is needed to "get ahead" (ibid: 21-23). Though the two types of social capital are not mutually exclusive, Putnam is specifically concerned with the way in which communities can build social capital that bridges across existing boundaries, and, he argues, schools can play an important role in this process (Putnam 2004).

Putnam's discussion of bridging and bonding social capital is similar to the earlier network theory of Mark Granovetter (1973), in that it argues for the benefits of *weak ties* connecting people from different groups over *strong ties* existing within well-defined and

more closed social groups. As pointed out by Lin (2001), however, the benefits of weak ties must be seen in light of the expected outcome. Weak ties and open networks may present actors with a way to access resources that they lack but closer networks and stronger ties can enable them to maintain and preserve the ones they already have. Therefore it is necessary to distinguish between different types of outcomes and consider under which conditions closed and open networks might generate a better return (p.27). This is an important point, which I will return to in the analysis.

Social capital theory shows that social relations play an important role for the educational outcomes of children and that cultural, human and financial capital in itself may not be enough. In a discussion of the Young Lives survey from the UK, Irwin (2009) presents data supporting this point. She shows that young people's relations with their parents are crucial for their school related orientations, even more than indicators of class and family educational background. In addition, she argues that parental support does not always have to be related to formal education (such as help with homework) and that the benefits of "simple efforts to engage parents with children's schoolwork may be limited in the absence of broader contexts of familial support" (p. 343-344). This last point is relevant to the specific social capital situation of migrant students. Their families may not always be able to help at the formal level (due to language difficulties for example) but may still show a great deal of support, which from a social capital perspective can be crucial for the educational outcomes of their children.

The acknowledgement of social relations and social capital in the educational process is, thus, an important one. However, as critics of both Coleman and Putnam have pointed out, attention must still be paid to societal structures and inequalities (Leonard 2005), in order not to conceptualise social capital as part of a 'deficit theory syndrome' –"just another thing that unsuccessful or inadequate individuals, families etc. lack" (Morrow

1999:760). Particularly Coleman's work seems to support the idea that social capital inheres in (positive) social control and that it is the family's responsibility to adopt certain norms to increase children's life chances (Dika and Singh 2002:34). This overlooks some of the more structural constraints met by families, not least migrant and minority ethnic groups.

Coleman's view on the family and its effect has furthermore been criticised for being conservative, anti-feminist and ethnocentric because of the way it argues for the benefits of full-time housewives, emphasises the negative effects of single-parent families and a high amount of siblings, and largely ignores the role of other family members (Morrow 1999:750,752; Leonard 2005:610). This criticism has particular relevance to the situation of migrant students. Even though some research has found a link between single-parent families, high amount of siblings and lower achievement among migrant students (Pereda *et al.* 2003a:7; Ryabov 2009:471), their extended family and siblings may also be an important resource. Siblings can provide practical help, emotional support, insider information about schools and bridges to new friendships (Holland *et al.* 2007:103-104). In migrant families, siblings furthermore often play a key role, because they have already found their way through school, and if they have reached a high level of education, they may take over the guiding role from parents in school matters (Crul and Schneider 2009:23).

Extended family or even family members in other countries may also have an important role to play, a point which is well illustrated by Moldenhawer (2005) in an article on Pakistani youngsters in Denmark. Moldenhawer analyses how this specific group has managed to incorporate education into its social mobility strategies and shows that this process should not only be seen in relation to the schooling of parents, but also as a result of the value on education placed by the *transnational* community, of which the young

people are part. As my analysis will show, the now widely applied transnational framework is an important tool to understand the everyday realities of young people of migrant background. Transnational theory acknowledges that migration is not a one-way and final movement, which involves detachment from the home-country and integration into the new receiving country. Instead migrants often engage in various cross-border relationships and transactions, and maintain social and cultural identities that incorporate both country of origin and country of settlement (Phizacklea 2000; Schiller *et al.* 1992; Vertovec 2009). This has an impact on their children, who acquire social networks and skills that are useful in both settings (Lewitt 2009). When looking at the social capital of migrant youth, such transnational networks must therefore necessarily be included.

Finally, social capital theory has been criticised for looking mainly at the social capital of adults or in children and young people's relations to adults, assuming a sort of 'top-down view' of the effect of parents on children (Morrow 1999:751). Childhood and youth researchers have pointed out that within social capital theory in general there is a lack of understanding of children and young people's networks and agency (Bassani 2007:19; Holland *et al.* 2007:98; Leonard 2005:608; Schaefer McDaniel 2004:160-161) and called for a more active conceptualisation of children, which explores how children themselves create social capital (Morrow 1999:751; Weller 2010). In line with this, an increasing amount of research has begun to look more specifically into the role of peers and 'peer social capital'.

Peer social capital is most often analysed as the result of engaging in peer groups with certain norms, expectations, values, achievement and school related behaviour (Carbonaro 2004; Ream and Rumberger 2008; Ryabov 2009). The main premise behind the concept is that young people's school attitudes and performance, to a large extent, are influenced by the peers that they surround themselves with. An example of this approach is Carbonaro's

work (2004), in which he argues that the way peers value schooling has an impact on the effort that students make in school. In addition, peers provide a modelling for action. Thus, young people with peers, who have dropped out of school, are negatively affected in their effort and achievement, whereas those who have peers, who approve of school norms and rewards tend to have higher levels of achievement (Carbonaro 2004:11-14) The same theme is discussed by Ream and Rumberger (2008), who illustrate how friendship networks and school behaviour are dialectically interlinked among Mexican American and non-Latino youth in the US. Certain behaviours, such as participation in extra-curricular activities, contribute to the formation of friendships, which value educational attainment. The same behaviours reduce students' vulnerability to street-oriented friendships and limit the likelihood that they will become influenced by peers, who drop out of school. Due to their lack of economic resources, Mexican American youth, however, participate less in school-related activities than non-Latino youth, and their access to such educationally beneficial forms of social capital is therefore limited (p.123-125). These findings add an additional and important dimension to the understanding of both the privileges of wealth and the disadvantages of poverty in relation to schooling. It shows that poverty not only limits educational resources and the time that families can spend on educating their children, but also prevents young people from participating in *social* activities and building up peer social capital that could have been helpful for their schooling.

Finally, within the literature on social capital and peers, a number of articles have looked at the effects of inter-racial or inter-ethnic friendships and peer groups on schooling. It is often suggested that a high concentration of migrant or minority ethnic students in a particular school hinders academic achievement, since the influence from peers is assumed to be negative (e.g. Heckmann 2008b:22-23; Zhou 1997:987). This assumption supports the case for bridging social capital in relation to academic achievement. However, it also

automatically assumes that migrant students are less motivated than non-migrant students, a generalization that has to be questioned (Fekjaer and Birkelund 2006). At the same time, some scholars have found that bonding social capital may, in fact, be more conducive to educational success than bridging social capital for migrant young people. In an article on immigrant youth in the US, Ryabov (2009) found that young people of immigrant background, who were involved in dense and homogeneous networks, tended to have better educational outcomes than native youths. This could be related to the fact, that Ryabov also found higher educational motivation among immigrant students, supporting the case for peer social capital. From a more critical perspective, it could, however also be suggested that the explanation lies in the support provided by co-ethnic networks. As pointed out by several researchers, co-ethnic support can have a significant positive impact on migrant groups (Ager and Strang 2008:178; Joly 2001:23-24; Portes and Zhou 1993) and this emphasises the previously made point, that bonding social capital and strong ties can have important outcomes (Lin 2001:27).

As this brief discussion shows, research into the friendship networks of migrants and minority ethnic youth adds an important dimension to the study of social capital and its effect on education. It shows that parents are not the only influential actors and, furthermore, that young people's active engagement with peers is important for their educational situation. Friendship and peer groups may, however, consist of many members with different degrees of attachments to the group, and studies of peers and their effect on education often do not include the complex nature of friendships (James 1996). These different levels of friendships and involvement with peer groups may, as I will show in the analysis, complicate notions of bonding and bridging.

Finally, educational research of peer social capital and social capital in general tend to focus quite narrowly on achievement or attainment as the outcome of social relationships

(Bassani 2007:18). However, it may be relevant to consider whether other types of outcome are possible and whether different types of outcomes may conflict. In an article on Vietnamese and black students in the US, Bankston (2004) shows that Vietnamese ethnicity can be a valuable social capital asset in generating educational success, but not necessarily for creating psychological well-being (Bankston 2004:178). Similarly, Qin *et al.* (2008) argue that even though young people of Asian American background are often considered a 'model minority' due to their generally high educational achievement, their social and psychological well-being may be rather poor (Qin *et al.* 2008:482). Finally, based on a study of mainly 'European-American' students in the US, Altermatt and Pomerantz (2005) found that low-achieving children benefited from establishing and maintaining relationships with high-achieving friends in terms of academic performance, but at the same time showed higher degrees of negative self-evaluative belief. This highlights that positive outcomes of social capital (achievement and attainment) may not always be the *only* outcomes and that they may in fact be detrimental to other, perhaps equally important, but often underestimated issues, such as emotional well-being and social inclusion.

1. 4. The Role of the School

In the previous sections, the main focus has been the effects of family background or the social relations of students with family and friends. Contrary to this, a fourth approach has looked at the more specific role of the school, either by researching the effect of different school systems, or by looking at intra-school structures and relations, mainly between teachers and specific groups of students.

The effects of particular school systems are frequently discussed in comparative studies, and can be found in a number of large scale European research projects, among others the research by Crul and colleagues on the Turkish second generation migrants in

Europe (Crul and Vermeulen 2003; Crul 2007; Crul and Schneider 2009). In these studies a number of differences between the educational systems of the countries in question are identified, mainly the age at which school starts, the amount of hours students have with teachers, the availability of supplementary support and help, the national school selection mechanisms and the age of tracking into different educational paths. These differences, it is argued, can to a large extent explain the differential outcomes of Turkish youth across countries and therefore Crul and Vermeulen conclude that “a debate on the differential effectiveness of national institutional arrangements is just as urgently needed as the discussions on distinctions between ethnic groups” (Crul and Vermeulen 2003:984).

Along a similar line, Nusche (2009) looks both at system-level policies and school level policies in her comparative literature review of “what works in migrant education” in different OECD countries. The review discusses the potentially negative effects of school choice (segregation because of school admission policies, ‘native flight’ and migrant families’ lack of information), streaming (disproportional groupings of migrant students in lower sets, bias in selection) and tracking at an early age (amplification of learning differences) (p.9-14). In addition, the processes taking place within individual schools are discussed, among others the expectations of teachers (p.31).

Teachers and the way in which they shape the educational performance of minority ethnic children, is a theme that has been researched extensively, particularly in the UK. Over the years, it has been documented that differential treatment of students from minority ethnic backgrounds within British schools is a widespread practice and that it has a major impact on the way minority ethnic students perform in school. Racism and the stereotyping of students from a Black Caribbean background has been thoroughly explored, beginning with Coard’s influential report (1971), which showed that ‘West Indian’ children⁵ were

⁵ The term used at the time to describe children from Black Caribbean backgrounds.

systematically led to underperform in British schools because of the low expectations and stereotypes of their teachers. Along a similar line, Gillborn (1997a), in his fieldwork at a multi-ethnic school in the West Midlands, observed that teachers operated according to a “myth concerning a black challenge to authority” (p.381). White teachers, he argued, often viewed black students as posing a threat to classroom order and expected trouble from them. This, he found, led to a disproportionate criticism of black students and affected their experiences of schooling. Supporting these and similar arguments is the vast amount of literature by researchers and commentators, which has documented differential treatment of black students, particularly male (e.g. Blair 2001; Carrington 1983; Mac An Ghaill 1988; Rollock 2007; Warren 2005; Youdell 2003).

In addition to the extensive number of articles and studies discussing the situation of Black Caribbean students in British schools, a smaller amount of research has illustrated that stereotypes also exist in relation to young people from Asian and Muslim backgrounds. These are, however, constructed around rather different perceptions, such as assumed low self-esteem and passivity of Asian/Muslim girls, low expectations among their parents, overly restrictive families, and reluctance of Asian students to mix with others (Basit 1997:427, 429-430; Crozier and Davies 2008; Gillborn 1997a:384-385). Finally, Poveda *et al.* (2009) has pointed to the existence of stereotypes in the Spanish context, by problematising the discourse of teachers towards immigrant students and showing how the focus on issues, external to the school (such as family background and previous schooling), serves to place immigrant students in compensatory education to a higher extent than autochthonous students.

Such negative stereotypes undoubtedly have serious educational consequences for migrants and minority ethnic students. The workings of stereotypes are, however, quite complex and as Archer and Francis (2005) show, not always constructed around explicitly

negative perceptions of cultural or ethnic background. In their article about teachers' views on British-Chinese pupils, they describe how teachers stereotype British-Chinese boys as less 'laddish' than other boys, and the girls as passive, quiet, hard-working and high-achieving pupils. Even though these stereotypes give British-Chinese students a positive image as learners within the schools, they are, as Archer and Francis argue, not completely unproblematic, since they "can serve to homogenise and straightjacket the diverse experiences of those drawn within its boundaries, masking issues of inequality" (p.166). Lee (1994) presents a similar argument in her article on Asian American students. She shows how Asian American achievement is much more complex than revealed by the stereotypical image of the 'model minority', and that the pressure of belonging to a group which is uniformly perceived as successful may prevent low-achieving students within the group from seeking help. Finally, also Qin *et al.* (2008) comment on the 'model minority' status often assigned to Chinese Americans and argue that this myth has a direct impact on peer acceptance and harassment (p.499).

Too much or too narrow a focus on the ethnic background of students can thus be problematic. Nevertheless, concerns over teachers who fail to acknowledge issues of ethnicity or difference have also been raised. In an article on teachers' assessment of Bangladeshi pupils, Walthers (2007) points out how lack of attention to ethnic background can lead to a misunderstanding of special educational needs. Similarly, in a discussion on diversity and integration in rural Spain, Harry argues that ignoring ethnic differences can serve to "reinforce the belief that differences represent deficiencies" since it leaves no way for minority ethnic students to demonstrate their competencies or counteract negative stereotypes expressed by peers (Harry 2005:104). The question of how to approach differences and find a balance between too much and too little attention to ethnic identity within schools is, thus, an important one and, as will be discussed in subsequent chapters,

the comparison between England and Spain provides a good opportunity to explore it further.

Within the literature that discusses the effects of the school environment on minority ethnic students, the main focus has, as illustrated above, been the role of teachers. Teachers' attitudes and the conditions under which they work cannot, however, be separated from the political environment and national guidelines (or lack of) (Devine 2005). Along a similar line, it can be argued that misunderstandings, discrimination, and even racism, cannot be detached from the political and social climate outside the school. Finally, the way in which different minority ethnic groups are positioned within different societies may have an impact on their future possibilities and therefore also potentially on their attitudes to schooling.

1.5. The society and the adaptation of migrants and minority ethnic groups

Acknowledging that power structures and discrimination, not only in schools, but also in the surrounding society are important to understand the educational situation of migrants and minority ethnic youth, a number of scholars have looked at the different ways in which groups adapt and are positioned in society. In his widely applied 'cultural-ecological theory of school performance', the North American anthropologist John Ogbu (1978; 1987; 1990; 1992; Ogbu and Simmons 1998), divides minority groups into three main categories and in this way aims to explain variations among minority groups in school performance.

The first category, *autonomous minorities*, has a distinct cultural, racial, ethnic, linguistic or religious identity and a relationship with the dominant group, which is not characterised by strict stratification. Ogbu mentions the Jews and the Mormons in the US as an example of this type and argues that whereas these groups may be minorities in a numerical sense, their economic, ritual or political roles are not specialised or significantly

restricted. They are able to compete with members of the dominant group for the same adult roles, and therefore they tend to receive a school-preparation similar to the majority group.

Contrary to this, the economic, ritual and political roles of the second category, *involuntary* or *castelike minorities*, are often sharply defined and these groups, e.g. African Americans or American Indians, are therefore both politically and economically subordinate. Involuntary minorities have not themselves chosen to come to the country in which they live, but were brought to it through conquest, slavery or colonization. As a result, they often define themselves in opposition to the majority culture, and the school, which represents majority culture, may be perceived as a threat to their minority identity. Combined with their experiences of limited social mobility, involuntary minorities may thus develop alternative ways, other than schooling, to “make it in society” (Ogbu 1990:47-48, 53).

The final category, *immigrant minorities*, falls between the two former groups. They have come to the host country more or less voluntarily and tend to have instrumental attitudes towards their host society and its institutions. This enables them to accept prejudice and discrimination at the price of achieving their ultimate objectives – for example improvement of their economic situation (Ogbu 1978:23-24; Ogbu 1990:46). The problems that immigrant minorities face in school are furthermore most often related to *primary cultural differences* (such as language barriers). These existed before migration and are not related to the group’s contact with the majority ethnic group. Therefore immigrant minorities tend to see them as barriers to be overcome in their quest for educational credentials and future employment. This is different than involuntary minorities, who are characterised by *secondary cultural differences* – differences that have arisen as a result of contact with the majority ethnic group. By involuntary minorities, these

differences are considered as markers of their identity and because they are often in opposition to the culture and learning of the school, maintaining them may entail a negative or oppositional approach to education (Ogbu 1992:10).

Ogbu's framework suggests that the educational performance of minority ethnic groups should be seen as a result of a given group's position in society and its perception of this position. This argument has played a major role for the way educational anthropologist and sociologists view minority school performance (Gibson 1997a:319) and has inspired educational researchers dealing with minority education in many different national contexts (e.g. Bhatti 2006; Herrera 2003; Moldenhawer 2005). Furthermore, Ogbu's distinction between voluntary and involuntary minorities has, in some cases been extended and used to understand differences between 'first' and 'second' generation immigrants (Gibson 1997b:437; Suarez-Orosco 1991:112).

In spite of its continuing use in the study of minority education, Ogbu's theory, however, has a number of problems. It has been criticised for being too simplistic and for leaving out important intra-group variations and differences (Gibson 1997a:322). Gibson (1997b) mentions the differences between economic immigrants, refugees, guest workers, undocumented workers, and migrants from former colonies, and illustrates that there is significant variety in the schooling situations of these different types of immigrants (p.431, 433-435).

Secondly, the framework does not include gender differences, even though these may affect the way individuals perceive their opportunities in society. In an article on second-generation Caribbean young adults in New York, Lopez (2002), for example, shows that men and women of Caribbean origin have quite different race-gender experiences. Whereas both men and women in her study agreed that education was important for attaining social mobility, women maintained a more optimistic life perspective, while men expressed an

ambivalent outlook towards schooling. This highlights the importance of including gendered experiences in cultural-ecological theories.

Finally, even though Ogbu aims to make his framework widely applicable and extend it to other countries than the United States, many of his arguments seem to be rather particular to the situation in the US. Since perceptions of ethnic and cultural diversity vary significantly between countries, its usefulness in other national contexts should therefore be carefully considered (Gibson 1997a:323-326; Gillborn 1997a:388-389; Luciak 2004:363). Nevertheless, the ways in which migrants and their descendants adapt to the society are important to consider in relation to different schooling patterns. This is also the background of another widely cited and applied framework - the 'segmented assimilation model' developed by the Cuban-American sociologist Alejandro Portes and colleagues (Portes and Rhumbaut 1996; Portes and Zhou 1993).

Contrary to previous theories, which considered integration as a linear or homogeneous process, the segmented assimilation model shows that the economic and educational mobility and adaptation of second generation migrants depends on the specific segment of society into which they assimilate, and that several forms of adaptation exist. One is integration into the white middle-class – *upwards mobility*. Another leads in the opposite direction into poverty and assimilation into the underclass – *downwards mobility*. Finally, a third adaptation form is economic advancement coupled with preservation of strong ethnic values – *upwards mobility through ethnic cohesion* (Portes and Zhou 1993:82; Zhou 1997:984). Using the examples of Mexican and Mexican Americans, Punjabi Sikhs in California and Caribbean youth, Portes and Zhou (1993) show how the differences between these communities (in terms of parental background, socio-economic resources of the co-ethnic community and experiences of discrimination) shape the assimilation and mobility patterns of young people.

Similar to Ogbu's cultural-ecological theory, the segmented assimilation model is developed in a North American context, and there are varied opinions on its applicability in a European context. Crul and Vermeulen (2003) discuss the case of Turkish and Moroccan second generation migrants in the Netherlands and argue that even though it may seem, at first, that the Turks exhibit many features of upwards mobility through ethnic cohesion and the Moroccans conform to the downwards assimilation pattern, the picture is much more complex. They argue that Moroccans, for example, are more represented in higher academic tracks, that there are crucial gender differences, and that ethnic cohesion may, in fact, work in a detrimental capacity to the educational success of Turkish Youth. There seems to be no category within the segmented assimilation model which suits the Moroccan group, and therefore Crul and Vermeulen conclude that the model is not supported by their findings (p.973-974).

From a European perspective, both the segmented assimilation theory and the cultural ecological theory of Ogbu, should, thus, be seen in light of the specific North American context in which they have developed and not be adopted uncritically. Nevertheless, as their widespread use illustrates - also in European research - it is important to consider the link between education and various ways of adapting into society, when studying the educational situation of migrants and minority ethnic youth.

1. 6. Inspiration and gaps

The research approaches described above all discuss important issues affecting the educational conditions and strategies of migrants and minority ethnic youth. They point to the role of class, culture, social relations, schools, and society in shaping these processes and form a broad theoretical and empirical framework, which has inspired and guided the development of my research project. A review of these different approaches has, however,

also revealed a number of gaps, which will be addressed in this study. These gaps are briefly summarized in the following sections.

1.6.1. Achievement and performance.

As the review has shown, most studies of migrants and minority ethnic youth in education focus on achievement and/or attainment. In the UK, there seems to be almost an obsession with achievement (Archer and Francis 2007:xiiv) and in many other countries various ways of measuring grades and educational level, similarly takes precedence in research. In the case of migrant students, achievement is furthermore often seen as an indicator of integration. Differences in educational performance and outcomes are, of course, of crucial importance, and every effort should be made to give children of all backgrounds the same chances to succeed. This type of research is therefore highly important. However, as pointed out by Huang and Weng (1998), “academic achievement per se does not solve the problems of social and economic inequality,” (p.242) and schooling is about more than just grades and performance. In their article on educational achievement and self-esteem among Asian, Latino and blacks in the US, Bankston and Zhou (2002) make the important point that ‘doing well’ is not always the same as ‘being well’. They show that while children from immigrant background tend to do somewhat better in school, they also display significantly lower levels of self-esteem and psychological well-being (p.408). There is therefore a need for more research into the social and informal aspects of schooling, the way in which young people from different backgrounds experience them, and the aspects they find important for ‘being well’.

This project takes a ‘holistic’ approach to schooling, including the way in which young people of various ethnic backgrounds experience both formal and informal aspects of their education. Educational ‘outcomes’ will thus be more broadly defined than in traditional

educational research and will to a higher degree be based on the criteria set out by the young people in the study. Similarly, post-school choices are approached through the concept of 'life-projects' rather than through 'attainment'. The concept of 'life-project' is, in this thesis, used to describe the young people's plans, hopes, expectations and aspirations for the future, including educational pathways, but also broader issues of family, jobs and life-style.

1.6.2. The agency of young people

A common problem with many of the theories described above is how little emphasis is placed on children and young people's own perceptions of education, schooling and educational inequality. This gap is critical, because only by understanding the factors that young people see as important to their educational situation can support mechanisms based on their needs and ideas be developed.

In the last two decades, new ways of dealing with childhood and children have developed within social research. Children are increasingly seen as competent social actors in their own right and it is acknowledged that they have experiences, understandings and ideas of their own, independent of the adults that care for them (Christensen and Prout 2002:481; Kellet *et al.* 2004:34; O'Kane 2008; Prout 2005:1-2). They should therefore be regarded as experts in their own lives (Clark 2004:143). These recent developments within childhood and youth studies highlight the importance of including the agency of children and young people in educational theories and in research into the educational situation of migrants and minority ethnic youth.

Furthermore, taking the perceptions and experiences of migrant and minority ethnic youth as a point of departure may be a way to approach the numerous and complex factors, which influence their education. As pointed out by Francis (2001) the multiplicity of

factors shown to influence the schooling of minority ethnic children and young people has led to a growing interest in the way they interplay and intersect (Francis 2001:158). The use of intersections can, however, be problematic because of the almost infinite possibilities of factors intersecting with each other, and because of the subsequent difficulties when trying to say something consistent about research participants. Therefore she argues that a way to approach such multiple factors, and to capture both consistencies and inconsistencies, is to take the subjective understandings of research participants as points of departure: “rather than asking if we are getting the real truth from our respondents, we should instead be asking whether their responses can provide new insights with which to reflect on the subject of our research” (Francis 2001:168).

In line with this approach and recent tendencies within childhood and youth research, this thesis does not look for a ‘real truth’ about the influence of different factors seen to influence migrants and minority ethnic students’ education and future lives. Instead, the thesis explores how the students themselves experience schooling and plan for the future. In this way their perspectives on the importance of different influences are approached.

1.6.3. Inter and intra group differences

A general criticism of much of the educational theory presented above has been the lack of attention to intra-group differences and complexities. In the study of migrants and minorities in education it is, indeed, difficult to find a balance between generalisations and attention to individual or ‘segmented’ behaviour. Most research on migrants and minority ethnic youth in education tend to focus either on the educational achievements and performance of very general categories, such as ‘migrants’ (1st or 2nd generation) compared to what is often called ‘natives’(e.g. PISA 2000, 2003, 2006), or to study the educational situation of one or two specific minority ethnic groups in one country (e.g. Pereda *et al.*

2003a; Worbs 2003). A small number of research projects have also compared the situation of the same minority ethnic group cross-nationally (e.g. Crul and Schneider 2009; Pásztor 2008). What all these projects have in common is the focus on either migration status or ethnicity as the basis for investigation. These factors are clearly important to study, but selecting participants on the basis of migration status or ethnic group makes it difficult, in practice, to make any conclusions about whether the data found is specific to a particular group or could be general for all young people, including non-migrants and non-minority ethnic youth.

To be able to explore both inter-group and intra-group differences and similarities in the way migrants and minority ethnic students experience schooling and plan for the future, I did not preselect any specific minority ethnic group for this research project. Instead, the basis of the research was a mixed group of students (both in terms of migration status and ethnicity) in a multi-ethnic school.

1.6.4. Importance of context

Most literature in the area of education and ethnicity is from countries with a long history of migration (like the US and the UK) and this is, to a certain extent, reflected in the review. As pointed out in several places in the literature review, caution should be taken when applying theories developed in one context onto another. When comparing educational experiences of migrant and minority ethnic groups in different countries it is furthermore important not to assume that the same ethnic or classification categories are equally relevant in the realities of research participants. Comparative research is, however, still an important tool when trying to understand various processes affecting young people of migrant and minority ethnic origin.

This project compares the experiences of young people in a relatively old migration country, England, with those of young people in one of Europe's new immigration countries, Spain. The ethnographic research approach used in the project enables me to take into consideration contextual particularities and to let the participants define which categories were relevant in the given context. While most existing comparative research is either quantitative or looks at one or two specific ethnic groups, the qualitative and ethnographic approach applied in this project is quite different and can bring new insights to research on young migrants and minority ethnic groups in education and their life trajectories.

1.7. Summary and research questions

The literature reviewed in this chapter has shown that the education of migrants and minority ethnic youth is a highly complex area. It has emphasized the importance of processes taking place both inside and outside the schools and potentially also 'after school' – in the perceptions of future possibilities and positions in society. Inspired by this, the research was given a dual focus, including both schooling experiences and life projects.

As illustrated particularly in the social capital literature, young people's schooling and life projects may be significantly affected, not only by their socio-economic background and individual abilities, but also by their social relations. To understand the role of social relations and to include the young people's perspectives on structural, individual and social factors, the aim of the research furthermore became to explore the influences that the young people themselves considered important to their schooling and future lives in the two contexts.

Reflecting this and the gaps presented above, three research questions were formulated to guide the research:

- 1) How do migrants and minority ethnic students in England and Spain experience going to school and which influences do they identify as affecting their school experiences?
- 2) What are the young people's plans, hopes, expectations and aspirations for the future and which influences do they believe affect their life-projects?
- 3) When comparing the research participants in England and Spain, what are the differences and similarities between:
 - a) their schooling experiences and life projects, and
 - b) the types of influences that they view as important for their school experiences and life projects?

These research questions aim to enable a holistic approach to exploring schooling and future lives, to include the perspectives and agency of young people, to explore both inter- and intra-group differences in the narratives of the young people, and to reflect the contextual and comparative approach. This reflects not only an analytical choice, but also, as will be discussed in detail in the following chapter, a methodological one.

Chapter 2: Methodology

Reflecting my background and training as an anthropologist and my wish to explore the above described research interest and questions, this project has been developed as an ethnographic research study. Ethnography is a qualitative methodological approach which implies that the researcher participates in people's daily lives "for an extended period of time, watching what happens, listening to what is said - in fact, collecting whatever data are available to throw light on the issues that are the focus of the research" (Hammersley and Atkinson 1995:1). Ethnography draws on a family of methods (O'Reilly 2005:3) and is usually carried out in one or a small number of settings (Hammersley and Atkinson 1995:39) with a relatively small number of research participants.

The first part of this chapter sets out the research design for this study and describes the choice of settings and research participants. It explains the choice of methods and discusses the ethical issues involved in the research. The second part of the chapter describes how the methods were carried out and developed in practice and discusses some adjustments made to the methods along the way. Acknowledging that the anthropologist is a key player in his or her own research, the third part of the chapter deals with issues of reflexivity and positionality. Finally, the fourth and last part of the chapter describes the type of data collected and the ways in which it was analyzed and dealt with.

2.1. Research design

2.1.1. Setting and sampling

The research consisted of ethnographic fieldwork in two schools, one in Birmingham and one in Madrid. The two schools were state-run, since the majority of migrants and minority ethnic groups in both England and Spain attend this type of school. Due to my wish to work

with a mixed group of students, both schools were multi-ethnic. Within each school I decided to work with an already established group (a class, a form group⁶, or a specific subject), which included students from a variety of backgrounds, also non-migrant and majority ethnic young people. Whereas most qualitative research on minority ethnic students and education focuses on one or two specific ethnic groups, I decided to study a broader sample of students representing a mix of backgrounds. This was, in part based on analytical considerations – because I wanted to be able to see both differences and similarities across the groups of students, but also on an ethical concern. By working with an already established group rather than picking out specific students based solely on their ethnic background, I avoided the ethical implications which I believed this would have had, most significantly, highlighting their ‘difference’ from the rest of their peer group in terms of ethnicity.

As a starting point, the groups that I worked with were all in the last year group (Year 11 in England and 4th cycle in Spain). This was based on my wish to explore the students’ future educational, occupational and personal aspirations and plans after compulsory schooling.

2.1.2. Methods

The main methods applied in the study were participant observation and interviews, with elements of participatory methods. These ethnographic methods were considered specifically suitable to the project for several reasons.

First of all, the aim of the research was to understand how migrant and minority ethnic students experience schooling and how they actively engage in developing life projects

⁶ All students at the English school belonged to a ‘form group,’ which had a designated form tutor. The groups met in the morning and in the afternoon. They were formed on the basis of academic ability or on the need of the students to improve in a specific subject. For a description, see p. 114

within the framework of different influences. The focus was on the students' perspectives, and the research design, thus, needed to be sufficiently flexible and open to explore potentially new and unforeseen issues. Ethnographic methods enable such flexibility and enhance the researcher's possibility of exploring the social world in the way that it is experienced by research participants (Eder and Corsaro 1999:524-525).

Secondly, schooling experiences and life projects must be seen both in the context of the specific *place* where they develop, and in the context of experiences that the students have over *time*. The emphasis on contextual and processual understandings of social behaviour is characteristic of qualitative research (Baszanger and Dodier 1997:10; Bogdan and Biklen 1999:30-31; Bryman 2008:394) and the use of ethnographic methods enables the researcher to place data within both a geographic and a temporal context.

Finally, there is a growing recognition of the usefulness of ethnographic methods in research with children and young people. It is argued that these types of methods give children and young people a more direct voice in research and increase their participation in the production of data (Christensen 2004; Christensen and James 2008a; James 2007; Murray 2006:276; Prout and James 1997:8). This is, of course, not only relevant in research with children and young people. Given the generational difference and potential power-structures between an adult researcher and a younger research participant, it is, however, especially important in this type of research (Mayall 2008; Morrow and Richards 1996).

The acknowledgement that children are competent social actors with independent opinions and experiences has led to a range of discussions about the most suitable methods to ensure participation of children and the best ways to elicit their experiences. Scholars have debated whether or not research with children differs from research with adults, and whether specific 'child-friendly' methods should be applied in the former (Christensen and James 2008a; Fraser 2004:23-25; Punch 2002b). As childhood researchers have pointed

out, there can be significant differences between children, even within the same age group and different methods may appeal to different children according to their gender, skills, temperament, interests etc. (Clark 2004:144; Hill 2006:84). Rather than developing specifically ‘child-friendly’ methods researchers should therefore concentrate on making the methods ‘participant-friendly’ to all members of the specific group they work with (Fraser 2004:25). This point is highly relevant to my project, given both the general differences between the participants and their varying linguistic and cultural abilities. Considering not only the status of the students in my project as young people but also their different competencies and experiences, a combination of ethnographic methods was chosen, aimed to make the research as ‘friendly’ as possible to all participants.

Participant Observation

Participant observation is central to ethnographic research and an often-used method in studies, which aim to explore the way in which people experience and give meaning to a given situation or phenomenon. It enables the researcher to explore issues, which are not put into words and to understand the context in which experiences develop (Bryman 2004:338-339). In addition, participating in people’s lives creates a relationship between the researcher and the research participants and this helps facilitate meaningful conversations and understandings (Davies 2001:71). All three points were relevant to the choice of using participant observation in this study.

First of all, I expected that a number of social phenomena taking place within the schools would be taken for granted by the students and thus not necessarily mentioned in interviews. By being in the field, I would, however, be able to identify such social phenomena and bring them up in interviews. Secondly, I considered context to be of high importance to the project, because of my comparative focus and my wish to understand the

young people's experiences in relation to the context in which they occurred. Participant observation enables the researcher to get an impression of context by being in the environment and observing a situation when it happens. A central assumption behind participant observation is that the long-term involvement with a group of people makes the researcher better equipped to see and experience reality in the same way they do (Bryman 2004:338; Marshall and Rossman 2010:140). When doing research with children this assumption can be questioned because the adult researcher is, quite obviously, not a child, and doing participant observation among children will not necessarily make him or her experience a situation in the same way children do (Punch 2002b:322). Participant observation does, however, give the researcher an understanding of the *context* in which children and young people's experiences develop and enables him or her to understand *why* they might experience the world in the way they do.

Finally, by participating and observing in the field, I was able to get a first hand impression of the young people's everyday life at school. This enabled me to ask more informed questions in the interviews and to contextualise the young people's answers – both processes that were invaluable for answering the research questions relating to their schooling experiences.

Interviews

The initial idea in the research design was to carry out both focus groups and individual interviews with the students and let these two methods supplement each other. Focus groups were chosen because they enable researchers to see how people collectively make sense of a phenomenon (Bryman 2008:476), and individual interviews because they were considered more suitable to discover and discuss individual opinions and perspectives. However, as the first part of the fieldwork in Birmingham progressed, it became

increasingly clear to me that this design would not work. The students were difficult to get together at the same time and it therefore proved somewhat impossible to arrange focus group discussions with four or five students. Most of the students furthermore preferred to do the interview with a friend, making the individual interview difficult to achieve. After having reflected on these difficulties, I decided to change the research design and carry out only interviews, either individually, in pairs or in small groups, depending on the wishes of the students.

Interviews are often classified as either structured, semi-structured or unstructured, the latter two being regarded as specifically useful in studies that focus on the meaning of particular phenomena to the participants (Robson 2002:269-271). In ethnographic research it is acknowledged that interviewees do not always make sense of the world in the way that the interviewer anticipates and therefore it is generally agreed that the structure of the interview needs to be flexible and sensitive to their views and perceptions (Mason 2002b:231). It is, however, important to consider how a researcher can construct interviews that enables him or her both to discover unexpected issues and to explore the issues that he or she initially was interested in (ibid:234). This is a particularly important consideration in comparative research, where the data needs a certain degree of comparability.

Being aware that the data collected in England would have to be compared to the data obtained in Spain, I believed that a certain degree of structure was needed in the interviews, and I constructed a semi-structured question guide (appendix 1). Because the research questions of the study aimed to capture the young people's perspectives and opinions about the influences affecting their schooling experiences and future lives, all questions were flexible and open-ended (except for a few introductory questions). I furthermore allowed the question guide to develop as new information appeared in the interviews or through participant observation. Inspired by the benefits of participatory methods described by

other researchers working with children and young people (e.g. Christensen and James 2008b; Cook and Hess 2007; Darbyshire *et al.* 2005; O’Kane 2008; Wilson *et al.* 2007), I furthermore decided to incorporate a participatory element in my interviews, which I chose to call the ‘post-it exercise’.

The ‘post-it exercise’

The use of participatory activities in interviews with children and young people has been related to two main advantages: 1) that participatory activities enhance the control of children and young people in the interview process and 2) that they create a more informal and dynamic interview context (Wilson *et al.* 2007). Inspired by these benefits, I developed a participatory activity for use in my interviews.

After a number of introductory and general interview questions, the interviewees were asked to write down on yellow post-it notes *the people or the things that influenced their school experiences or how they felt at school*. Later in the interview they did a similar exercise writing down *the people or the things that they believed would influence their future life*. These two questions, thus, related directly to the two research foci of the research – schooling experiences and life project. The notes were put by the students on a large piece of paper and discussed. In this way, the activity functioned as a kind of brainstorming session over the things and people that the young people themselves found important.

2.1.3. Ethics

The project was carried out in accordance with standard ethical guidelines and adhered to the principles of informed consent, confidentiality, and anonymity.

The principle of informed consent is central to social research. Research participants must be “fully informed about all aspects of the research project, which might reasonably be expected to influence willingness to participate” and give their consent freely and voluntarily (University of Warwick 2007:2). Any information must furthermore be conveyed to the research participants in a language that is meaningful to them (NCB 2006:3; GCCS s.a.:8). To comply with this, I produced a written information leaflet and a consent form to be used in the schools (appendix 2) and I discussed the project verbally with the students before asking them to give me their consent. In Birmingham, a short description of my project was furthermore put up on the web-page of the school, with a contact e-mail address in case they or their parents had any questions or concerns.

Given the age of the students and in line with the University of Warwick Guidelines, the students were considered competent to give their own valid consent⁷. In agreement with the Head of the school in Birmingham, consent was only asked of the students, but from the outset I encouraged all of the participating students to talk to their families about the project. The information leaflet contained my contact details and I told the students specifically that their parents were welcome to contact me, if they had any questions or concerns. As will be described below, active consent was, however, asked of parents of younger students in Birmingham and of all students in Madrid due to the regulations of the school (appendix 3).

⁷ It follows from these guidelines: *Parents (and others with parental responsibility) may agree to their children taking part in research, but where a child is able to understand sufficiently to give informed consent, their consent should be obtained. Where the child consents to participate, the parent's consent is not required, but there are often good reasons for informing parents about planned research* (University of Warwick 2007: 4, paragraph 5.4.2).

It is the researcher's responsibility to assess whether the child has sufficient understanding to consent to the research. Children's capacity to consent to research depends on their understanding of the research to be undertaken...Where information about the research and study can be given clearly and simply, it is possible for quite young children to consent to take part in research (University of Warwick 2007: 4, paragraph 5.4.3).

Confidentiality is another principle which must be respected, unless there are “clear and over-riding” reasons not to do so (ASA 1999, University Of Warwick 2007:6). When doing research among children and young people, such reasons can include if a child discloses that he or she is being seriously ill-treated or if a possible threat to life, health or safety exists (GCCS s.a.:12; Masson 2004:52; NCB 2006:3; University of Warwick 2007:4). At the beginning of each interview, I explained to the students that what they said to me during interviews was confidential unless such a situation would arise and I assured them that should anything like that happen, I would discuss the situation carefully with them before taking any action. Fortunately, no such situation occurred.

A final principle, mentioned in most guidelines on ethics, is the promise of anonymity. To ensure anonymity of the research participants of this study, I have changed their names and the names of local places in the thesis. Very clear markers of identity have similarly been omitted.

2.2. The ethnography in practice

Carrying out ethnographic research in a comparative context presents a number of challenges. As mentioned in the introduction, one of these challenges is the different terminology used in the countries under study and the difficulties this presents when selecting research participants. Another is the more local differences in, for example, interaction patterns and infrastructure, which necessarily affect the researcher’s scope of action. The two research contexts that formed the basis for this project thus shaped the practical ways in which I was able to manage the ethical procedures and apply the methods. The following descriptions of how the two fieldworks developed chronologically and how the methods were adjusted accordingly provide a background against which to understand the practical application of methods in this project.

2.2.1. Birmingham

In Birmingham, access to the school was gained through the personal contact of one of my supervisors. After her introduction of me to the school, I met with the Head of the school and negotiated access to the students and teachers through him. All the formalities, such as CRB-check⁸ and confirmation of an agreed start date, were organized, and a few months later I began the fieldwork. My first day at the school was a teacher training day, where I was introduced to the teachers by the Head of the school. Two days later at an assembly for year 11, I was introduced to the students by the Head of the Year⁹, and in the following weeks I introduced my project to several of the classes at the school. In addition, I went to all the Year 11 form groups to tell the students about myself and my project and to allow them to ask questions.

The first few weeks of my fieldwork at the school, I spent most of my time getting to know the school, the students and the classes they attended. This was a rather confusing period since all the students were divided, not only according to the different topics they had chosen, but also, in most subjects, into sets¹⁰. I did not know the schedule of the students and was not yet familiar with their faces. Therefore I found it challenging to figure out where to go and which classes to attend. In the beginning, I went to a form group in the morning and asked some of the students in the group if I could follow them to their next class, or I arranged with a teacher in advance to participate in his or her class. This was, as will be seen, a very different and significantly more complicated approach than the one I followed in Spain.

⁸ Criminal Records Bureau Check – required for working within schools in the UK.

⁹ The teacher who has the main organisational responsibility for a given year group.

¹⁰ Children in the school were divided into five different ‘sets’ according to their ability. For more on how students are grouped in English schools, see p. 74.

In addition to figuring out the schedule of the students and their whereabouts, my main concern in the first few weeks was to find a group that I could work with. I participated in as many different classes as possible and tried to get an impression of their composition, which was quite different. Some consisted only of boys, and some were made up exclusively of students of white or Asian backgrounds. Since I wanted to work with a mixed group of students none of these classes were suitable.

After two weeks in the school I decided to work with the drama group. Drama was an elective GCSE¹¹ subject at the school and the drama group was mixed, with an almost equal amount of students of white, black and Asian background, and with more or less the same amount of boys and girls. In addition, the drama group consisted of mixed abilities and because I had participated in a lot of the other classes, I could see that it included students from various different sets. After the Head of the school and the Drama teacher both agreed that the group was suitable for my project, I presented the project to the drama students. I explained the information leaflet and the consent form (appendix 2) in an easily understandable language, and made very clear that participation was voluntary. After the class, I furthermore talked individually to the two students in the class, who were EAL students¹², explained the aims and terms of the research again, and made sure that they understood what my project was about.

After my presentation, one girl signed the consent form straight away and gave it back to me. The rest of the class wanted to think about it, but when I came back to them the following week, only a few students returned the consent form. The rest were not interested in participating, which surprised me, but also made me reconsider my recruitment procedure. I therefore decided to leave the idea of having a specified class or group to work

¹¹ General Certificate of Secondary Education, see description p. 75

¹² EAL – English as Additional Language.

with and began to ask students at a more individual basis, when I had an informal conversation with them and their friends during break times.

By the end of the first fieldwork phase in Birmingham, I had managed to interview nine students. This was much less than I had anticipated, and I was aware that it would not constitute a sound body of material for comparison. It was therefore not without anxiety that I went into my second fieldwork in Madrid.

2.2.2. Madrid

In Madrid I did not have direct access to a school via personal contact. I therefore adopted a mixture of strategies and pathways to find a school, which could suit the previously mentioned criteria. Through a contact in Barcelona I had obtained the name of a senior teacher in Madrid, who was willing to help me with my project and allow me to do fieldwork in his school. However, I soon realized that his school was unsuitable for the project, because it was a semi-private Catholic school and had far fewer migrant students than many state-run schools in the area. The teacher agreed instead to enquire with his colleagues in other schools. In the meantime, I made personal contact with a number of schools, but after having seen a detailed project description and references, they declined to participate. After a few rather anxious and frustrating weeks, the teacher that I had initially been in contact with gave me the contact of a school, where one of his friends worked. The director of the school had agreed to have a meeting with me and after presenting my project to her, she allowed me to do my fieldwork at the school, on the condition that the teachers would consent. They did, and I began my work at the school a few weeks later.

Contrary to the young people in England, the students in the school in Spain were not divided into sets. They had most of their classes together, and a few subjects with their

parallel class. All in all the 4th cycle had 40 students and was divided into two classes. This was a much more manageable setting than in Birmingham and I quickly understood the layout and the whereabouts of the students. Together with the director, I chose a class that would form the basis of my fieldwork. This class had the highest number of students with migrant backgrounds.

When I arrived at the school, the teachers of the year group that I was working with were already informed of my project, and they had had the chance to decline my participation in their classes. On this basis, I was given a schedule and knew in advance which classes to enter. My first class was English, and the teacher had set aside the whole hour for me to present myself and my project to the students. This was done both in English (to fit the subject of the class) and in Spanish (because the English level of the students was limited) and ended up being a good introduction, where the students had a lot of opportunity to ask about my background and the project. Later that day, when I participated in a music class, I was again given plenty of time to present myself and by the end of the day all the students in the year group knew about my project and why I was at their school.

In order for the students to participate in the interviews, the director required the consent of their parents. A letter was put together by the school (appendix 3), and after I had been there a few days, it was given to the students by the director. It was made clear that the project was voluntary, but when she asked the group if they wanted to be part of the project, almost all of them shouted *¡sí!* Compared to the information leaflet, which I gave out in Birmingham, the letter, which the students were given in Madrid, did not contain the same amount of information. Acknowledging that the students' consent was just as important as their parents, I did, however, do a significant amount of verbal follow up with the students, explaining what I was doing, and asking their permission.

After a few months at the school, I decided to extend my fieldwork to include the students in the bridging class (a class for recently arrived migrants – see p.109). I was allowed to participate in some of their classes by the teachers, and interviewed almost all the students in this group. The introduction and consent procedure followed the same pattern as with the other group, and the teachers and I were careful to explain the project in an easily understandable way and allow plenty of time for the students to ask questions. Acknowledging that many of the parents knew less Spanish than their children, the letter of consent was explained carefully, so that the students could explain it to their parents. For two students, whose mother tongue was English, I translated the consent form into English, and for two Chinese students, who had particular difficulties with Spanish, I had the form translated into Chinese. After both my introduction and the handing out of the consent letter, I followed up with the individual students, making sure that they had understood what had been said.

In general the students in Spain were more enthusiastic about participating in the project and it was easier for me to recruit them for interviews. Some of this was perhaps due to the fact that they, by participating in an interview, were taken out of their regular class. Nevertheless, by the end of the Spanish fieldwork, I had interviewed 28 students, and knew that in order to compare this with the English context it would be necessary to go back to the school in Birmingham.

2.2.3. Birmingham revisited

Having a limited amount of time to carry out the follow-up fieldwork in Birmingham, I decided to ask the Head of the school for help in recruiting students for my project. Due to the pressure on Year 11 regarding their upcoming GCSE exams, I decided to include Year 10 students in the project. The Head of the school referred me to the Head of Year 10, who

agreed to help me ask students to participate. I explained that I was interested in interviewing a mixed group of students (both in terms of ethnicity, gender, and academic ability) and highlighted that it was important that the students felt that they entered voluntarily into the project. Because the students would not get to know me as well as they did the year before, and because they were younger, consent was asked from both parents and students.

This strategy proved efficient and, with help from the teacher, I was able to interview ten additional students. By the end of my fieldwork period, I was also able to recruit a few more students with the help of another teacher and by asking friends of students, who had already been interviewed. Finally, I presented myself in one of the EAL groups, and in that way managed to recruit three more students for interviews. As in Spain, the project was carefully explained to the students and I made sure that they had understood what it was about.

By the end of the second fieldwork in Birmingham, I had interviewed 26 students, making the total number of interviewees 54 in both countries. As planned in the research design, these 54 young people came from a variety of different backgrounds and were, as shown in figure 1, very mixed:

Figure 1: The gender, age and ethnic/national background of the interviewees

Birmingham	Madrid
26 students	28 students
<u>Gender:</u> 13 girls, 13 boys	<u>Gender:</u> 12 girls, 16 boys
<u>Age:</u> 14-16	<u>Age:</u> 12-17
<u>Ethnic/National background:</u> Asian background: 8 Black African: 6 Black Caribbean: 2 Mixed Heritage: 2 White British: 6 Other: 2	<u>Ethnic/National background:</u> Africa: 5 China: 1 Dominican Republic: 3 Eastern Europe: 4 South America: 7 Spain: 8
6 were not born in England	20 were not born in Spain

The above description of the research process in the two cities has illustrated the differences between the two fieldwork sites and the different approaches I had to take in order to proceed with the fieldworks. The lack of personal contacts to gatekeepers made the initial access to a school more difficult and time-consuming in Spain. However, once the initial contact was established, the size of the school in Madrid, the structure of the classes, and the willingness of the students to participate in the project made access to data more manageable. Still, the process of introduction and consent had to be adapted to the specific school and all attempts were made to carry it out as sensitively as possible, in line with the

different contexts of the two schools and with the particular needs or language skills of the students. The same considerations were reflected in the application of the methods.

2.2.4. Participant observation in practice

In total, the fieldwork stretched over a period of 14 months. Of these, seven months were spent doing participant observation in the schools, three days a week. In both Birmingham and Madrid I kept a field diary, in which all my observations and methodological reflections were written down.

Participant observation can be implemented in a number of ways and can involve various degrees of participation and observation (e.g. Gold 1958; Spradley 1980:58-62). The balance between the two is, to a certain extent, the researcher's choice, but depends also on the research settings, the interaction patterns within them, and the roles they make available to the researcher.

In Birmingham, the students were divided into a wide range of classes, and to get an impression of the variety, I participated in as many different classes and sets as possible. At break time, I 'hung out' in the outdoor areas or in the cafeteria, hoping to be able to engage in informal conversations with the students. This was, however, more difficult than I expected. The students were mostly in their groups and I found it rather hard to 'mingle'. Most of my informal conversations with students therefore took place immediately before or after class, when they were either waiting to get into their classroom or leaving it. In addition to doing participant observation within school hours, I participated in a number of events – Black History Night, a trip to the theatre, the EAL extra-curricular drama club, the after school home-work club and a number of meetings.

In Madrid, due to the different school structure, I followed the same group of students every day, and they quickly became more familiar with my presence. As part of my work

with this group, I went on a number of school trips to exhibitions in the city. At break time, I usually sat outside or had a chat with some of the students in the halls. Not all the students were equally comfortable or interested in talking to me, but as will be discussed in section 2.3.2, I found that there was a different interaction style at the school, which made it easier for me as a researcher to blend in. Besides participating in classes with my regular group, I spent a few days participating in the bridging class and visited their after-school homework class.

In both schools, the degree to which I participated and observed in the classes depended on the subjects taught and the style of the teachers. In very theoretical classes, such as maths or science, I mostly sat among the students and observed, whereas in the more creative or recreational classes, such as gym or arts class, I participated as a student. The Spanish learning context left more room for flexibility than the English context and on several occasions the teachers would spend lesson time to ask me, for example, about the situation in my country in relation to the topics discussed. My participation was also more similar to that of a student in Spain than in England. In maths, I was given the same tasks to do as the students, in Music I had to learn to play the notes on the piano, and in Ethics I did group work with one of the students regarding human rights violations. Nevertheless, my participation was still limited since the teachers would not ask me to answer questions in class or do presentations, like the students had to. In England, I was usually not part of the classes in the same way and I would most often either sit and observe the class or walk around among the students asking them about their work.

How these different degrees of participation and observation affected the way the students saw me is hard to tell. In both schools the students reacted to me in a variety of ways, ranging from not talking to me at all, to actively seeking me out in break time or on school trips. Their degree of interaction with me also depended on the extent of their own

social network or on whether or not some of their friends were in school on the specific day. This therefore led me to the conclusion, that our interactions had more to do with their varying levels of social needs than with my specific role in the class or in the school in general. There was, however, also a certain gender aspect to my interactions with the students. In both Birmingham and Madrid, the students that I had most informal conversations with were girls, and even though many of the boys were friendly, they seldom proactively sought out conversations with me.

Anthropologists most often enter the field with broad areas of interest, rather than predetermined categories or observational checklists (Marshall and Rossman 2010:139). Inspired by the literature, which informed the project, and considering the focus of the research questions, my broad areas of interest centred on interaction patterns among students, relations between students and teachers, and the school environment. Due to the comparative aspect of the research, a number of other interesting observations, however, gained importance during the fieldworks and informed both further observations and the development of the interviews.

2.2.5. Interviews in practice

Each interview was introduced explaining the purpose of the project, the process of the interview, the rights of the interviewees not to answer questions, and the principles of confidentiality and anonymity. Before beginning the interview, the interviewees were furthermore asked whether they felt comfortable with me audio-recording the interview, and whether they had any questions. Three students preferred to do the interview without being recorded and in these cases, notes were taken in hand and written out immediately after the interviews. The remaining interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim. All the interviews in England were carried out in English and all the interviews in Spain were

carried out in Spanish, except for two, which were conducted in English since that was the mother tongue of the interviewees. Because many of the students were migrants, English and Spanish was not always their native language and extra care was taken to make sure that they understood the questions and that I had fully understood what they told me.

The interviews were either carried out individually, in pairs, or in some cases in groups of three. Group interviews are generally considered well-suited to research with children and young people, as they can bring on a greater range of responses and stimulate new ideas (Lewis 1992:414-415). Children and young people often feel more comfortable and confident when there are other children or young people present, and group interviews can dilute some of the power dynamics between a child interviewee and an adult researcher (Hill 2006:81). Some young people may, however, prefer individual interviews because they are more private (Punch 2002a:48). Acknowledging this difference, I asked the young people in my study if they preferred to do the interview alone or with friends. Most of them chose to do the interview with one or two friends.

Group interviews require that the researcher is sensitive to the group dynamics in the interview situation (Morgan *et al.* 2002:15-16; Swain 2006:204) and to the effects of the groups' relations outside of the interview setting (Frey and Fontana 1991:185). It is important to consider, whether the topics talked about can create differences, embarrassment or uncomfortable situations between the interviewees. Even though the group interviews in my study were conducted with friends, I was therefore cautious of questions, which could embarrass the students or make them feel uncomfortable, such as for example personal questions about their family life or legal status. The use of participatory elements in the interview to some extent helped this, because they enhanced the young people's control over what was being said.

2.2.6. The ‘post-it exercise’ in practice

From the outset, the post-it exercise was mainly seen as a group exercise, and therefore it was applied in all the interviews that took place in pairs and in groups of three. I also used the exercise in a few of the individual interviews, but since most of my individual interviews were conducted with students who had limited English and Spanish knowledge, I decided that it was more appropriate to ask the students the two questions verbally rather than requiring them to write. In the individual interviews, the students were asked the same questions as were used in the post-it exercises, and they were given plenty of time to think about their answers.

Carrying out the post-it exercises in the two different contexts revealed an interesting difference, relating to the familiarity of the students with participatory methods. While the students in Birmingham were already used to doing participatory exercises from enrichment days and other activities at the school, the students in Madrid did not seem equally familiar with participatory exercises, and I often had to explain the activity a few times before they knew how to take part. In general the students in Madrid also wrote fewer post-it notes than their peers in Birmingham. The discussion following the notes was, however, equally lively, and valuable data came out of the exercise in both contexts.

The exercise made it possible for the students to introduce issues or people, which I would not have thought to ask about, and to discuss them in ways meaningful to them. The number of post-its that the students wrote on each category of people or things (family, friends, school, media/idols, etc.) furthermore gave me an impression of the importance that they gave to these different categories. As described by other researchers (e.g. Christensen and James 2008b; O’Kane 2008), the use of a participatory activity, thus, gave the students a certain part of control over the topics discussed in the interviews and provided them with a way to indicate their importance.

2.2.7. The setting of the interviews

The setting of an interview is important when doing research with children and young people (Punch 2002b:328, Scott 2000:92). The place where the interview is carried out has to be sufficiently private while still public (Hazel 1995) and in a school, the researcher has to pay particular attention to the way a setting may shape children and young people's communication with him or her (Hill 2006:82). All interviews in this research project were carried out within the school. In Birmingham, the interviews took place in a meeting or interview room made available to me by the school. These two rooms were situated among a number of offices, and therefore did not have direct associations to school work. In Madrid, most interviews were similarly done in a meeting room, but some of the interviewees asked if we could do the interview outside in the school yard and we did.

The interviews in Madrid took place during classes (mostly in the class called *tutoriales* which was not an examined class¹³) and participation in the project therefore did not involve taking up spare time for the students. In fact, some of the students may, as mentioned, have seen the interview as an opportunity to get out of class. In Birmingham, on the other hand, interviews had to take place either at break time or after school, due to the demands from the school that the participants did not miss out on any classes. This created an additional challenge, especially in the first fieldwork. I did not consider the half hour break sufficient for an interview and therefore I had to ask the students to stay after school. This may have been part of the limited interest that the students showed in the project, as participation meant that they would have to give up their leisure time or after school activities. In the follow up fieldwork, however, there had been a change in the way break time was organised and the students had an hour lunch break once a week. I was therefore able to conduct the interviews during these breaks which made them easier to organize.

¹³ See description on p. 118

As argued by Hall (1995) the school can be considered as one out of several cultural fields through which minority ethnic youth move and in her study on British Sikh teenagers, she shows how they create multiple cultural identities within these cultural fields. Based on this, it may be argued that the young people I interviewed took on a specific cultural identity, because the interviews took place within a school setting and that I perhaps would have had different data had I conducted the interviews in an out-of school setting. Considering the relative difficulties I had in recruiting participants for the project combined with the time frame of the research I did, however, not consider out of school interviews as a viable option. Instead I tried to make the interview context as informal and 'non school like' as possible by sitting in comfortable chairs around a table and by letting the students talk about issues of their interest. In addition, I had given my own role in the school a lot of thought, because, as pointed out by Hill, much depends on the way the researcher locates himself or herself within the school environment (Hill 2006:83).

2.3. Reflexivity and role in the field

In qualitative research the researcher is 'the instrument' (Marshall and Rossman 2010:112) and therefore his or her personal characteristics and their effects on the research must be taken into consideration. Much has been written about the way in which ethnic or racial difference (or similarity) between researcher and research participant can affect research (Abbas 2006a; Andersen 1993; Gunaratnam 2003; Troyna 1993:107) A growing body of research has dealt with being an adult researcher among non-adult research participants, especially in regards to issues of power, authority and generational differences (Christensen 2004; Mayall 2008; O'Kane 2008). The effect of gender differences or similarities between researcher and research participants has also been discussed and analysed (Pattman and Kehily 2004; Song and Parker 1995:251; Swain 2006:209-210). Finally, the possible

effects of being a foreigner in the field have been mentioned (Ellen 1984:31-32; Hammersley and Atkinson 1995:93). As a white, female, and foreign adult carrying out research with a mixed group of young people (both in terms of ethnicity/nationality, gender and age) all four discussions are relevant to my project.

2.3.1. Ethnic similarity or difference in research

In her article on 'Studying across difference' (1993) Andersen asks "how can white scholars elicit an understanding of race relations as experienced by racial minorities?" (Andersen 1993:41). Similar questions have been raised by other researchers working with minority ethnic groups (Gunaratnam 2003; Troyna 1993:107). The discussion about interracial or interethnic interviews has two dimensions: the first is the extent to which a researcher can understand the experiences of research participants from a different 'race' or ethnic group, and the second is the extent to which the nature of the interaction between the researcher and the research participants changes when sharing or not sharing the same 'racial' or ethnic background.

The first dimension is, in my opinion, not exclusive to inter-racial or inter-ethnic interviews. It is, in any interview encounter, important to consider the extent to which the researcher really understands the experiences of the respondent. Being a white researcher, who has not experienced racism or discrimination, it may be more difficult, or less 'intuitive' to understand such experiences. That does, however, not necessarily rule out the possibility of having a sympathetic and instructive interview, and it should not prevent white researchers from *trying* to understand issues faced by minority ethnic groups. In addition, a shared ethnic background does not always make the researcher more knowledgeable about the feelings, values and practices of his or her research subjects (Palmer 2006:490). As illustrated by Palmer (2006), assumptions of shared experiences and

understandings may lead researchers to actually misunderstand the situation of research participants and therefore commonality should not be taken for granted.

With regards to the second dimension, some are of the opinion that information is obtained more easily when the researcher and the research participants share the same ethnic identity. It has been argued that research respondents may be less reluctant to share information with a researcher of the same ethnic background (Abbas 2006a:326) and that children feel more comfortable expressing their “felt racial attitudes” when the interviewer is of the same race (Aboud *et al.* 2003:168). As discussed by Song and Parker (1995) however, the outsider/insider duality tends to obscure not only internal differences within both of these groups, but also the variety of experiences which can occur between the researcher and the researched. In some situations the researcher is not a complete insider or outsider, and as they point out “many dimensions of sameness and difference can be operating at any given moment and where two people may claim commonality on one dimension, they might fall apart on another” (p.246).

All the interviews for this research project were conducted by me, and I did not share an ethnic background with any of the participants. Having an open interview in which the interviewees were allowed to set parts of the agenda, and combining interviews with participant observation was, however, my way to counter the potential disadvantages of not having the same ethnic background as the young people. Still, I find that it should be carefully considered whether same-ethnicity research necessarily makes interviewees feel more comfortable with the interviewer. In fact, some of the students revealed some rather personal information to me, which I am not sure that they would have shared had I been from the same ethnic community as their own. Finally, as mentioned earlier, several of the interviews were carried out with pairs and friends who themselves were of different ethnic

backgrounds, and this clearly complicates the same-ethnicity researcher-interviewee dualism.

2.3.2. Age-differences between researcher and research participants

Age, generation, and power imbalances between adults and children are of key concern to researchers who wish to understand children and young people's lives and experiences (Mayall 2008:109). Some ethnographic researchers have tried to approach and minimize this imbalance by establishing themselves as an 'other adult' or 'non-authoritative adult' in the field (Christensen 2004:173-174; Eder and Corsaro 1999:527). Others have adopted a 'least-adult role' – "undertaking a responsive, interactive, fully involved participant observer role with the children in as least an adult manner as possible" (Mandell 1988: 438).

In carrying out the study, I aimed to participate in the young people's activities and distinguish myself from the role of an authoritative adult. In the classes and at break time, I placed myself among the students and in the classes, I participated as much as a student as possible. I furthermore asked the students to call me by my first name and considered carefully how to dress in order to obtain the role of a non-authoritative adult. The non-authority adult role can, however, be difficult to maintain in an institutional context, because of conflicting expectations from teachers and other adults in the field (Mandell 1988; Thorne 1993:19) One teacher in Birmingham, for example, asked me to be "her eyes", and even though I tried my best not to, such situations clearly compromised the role that I aimed to have.

The roles available to a researcher do, however, not only depend on his or her choices and the expectations of the research participants. It is also affected by the existing power structures between children and adults in the field and I found a significant difference

between the way the student-teacher interaction was constructed in Birmingham and Madrid. In Birmingham, all teachers and staff were called by their last name, and by asking the students to call me by my first name I created a natural distinction between me and the other adults in the school. The teachers in Birmingham were furthermore visibly distinguished from the students by the way they dressed. Students wore school uniforms, male teachers suits and tie, and female teachers similarly smart clothing. To disassociate myself from the teachers, I dressed in a more casual manner, but since I didn't have a uniform I did not dress like the students.

At the school in Madrid, it was normal practice to call the teachers by their first name and the informal *tu*. Asking the students to call me by my first name therefore did not in itself distinguish me from the teachers. The students wore their own clothes, which were slightly different from the teachers', but not so clearly marked and therefore it was easier for me to blend in clothes-wise. Finally, I found that relations between teachers and students in Birmingham were much more formal and authoritarian than in Madrid. In Birmingham for example, I was told that I could jump the line for the canteen because I was an adult (an offer I rejected). In Madrid the teachers would wait until the students had been served before they themselves would get their coffees. These differences did, in my opinion, make it easier for me to obtain a non-authoritative adult role in Madrid than in Birmingham. In Birmingham, I had the impression that many of the students saw me as an adult figure in opposition to themselves, due to the clear distinctions between adults and children/young people. In Madrid, the distinction between adults and children/young people was not as clearly marked and this made my interaction with the students easier. As this illustrates, not only the age-differences between the researcher and the informants, but also the way in which age differences and social positions are understood in the field need to be taken into consideration (Christensen 2004:167).

2. 3. 3. Gender differences between researcher and research participants

A wide range of qualitative researchers have commented on the effect of gender on their research situation (e.g. Connolly 2000; Pattman and Kehily 2004; Song and Parker 1995; Swain 2006). This discussion primarily relates to whether the researcher can gain access or become accepted by the group he or she is studying, and whether the amount and quality of data obtained is shaped by the researcher being a man or a woman. Pattman and Kehily (2004) suggest that it may be easier for a man to become “one of the guys” than for a woman to join the often insulated and exclusive girls groups (p.134-137). In addition, there are some indications that certain issues are more likely to be discussed, when the researcher shares the same gender as the research participants. In Song and Parker’s (1995) experiences, Song found that men were more hesitant to discuss their interpersonal relationships with her, while Parker experienced a woman saying to him that “there were certain questions that a woman would have asked, which he didn’t” (p.251).

Both examples suggest that there may be some advantages of doing ‘same-gender-research’. As previously mentioned, most of my informal conversations during fieldwork were with girls, supporting this point. In the interviews conducted as part of this research, I did, however, not find any significant differences in the way that boys and girls related to me. In part, this may have been because many of the interviews were done in pairs, and the students thus had the confidence of having a good friend next to them in the interview. Quite naturally, not all interviews were equally successful, but rather than being a question of gender, I found that it depended on the interaction I had previously had with the particular students, highlighting the benefits of participant observation.

2.3.4. Being a foreign researcher

Being a foreigner in the society where one does research can have certain benefits. As mentioned by Hammersley and Atkinson (1995) foreign anthropologists can to some degree be allowed to cross existing gender restrictions or ethnic groupings (p. 93, 96). Another advantage can, as Corsaro and Molinari (2008) argue, be that a foreign ethnographer is often seen as a less threatening adult by children and young people (p. 242). In my case, I similarly found that as a foreigner (Danish) I had a number of advantages. One particularly relevant advantage was that I, similar to many of the students whom I interviewed, had a 'migrant' background. As mentioned, I did not share their ethnic background and I will not pretend to have experienced the migration situation in the same ways as the young people in my project. Still, I did share some of the same experiences of being a foreigner and of having a limited network. Several of the students were curious about my feelings towards my own country and how I had learned English or Spanish. They may also have felt more comfortable critically sharing experiences of living in Spain or England because I was Danish, rather than Spanish or British, and therefore did not in any way represent the two countries. As this illustrates, being a foreign researcher, may thus have had certain advantages both for building rapport and for collecting data.

2.4. Data collection and analysis

During the fieldwork, I collected three main types of data:

- 1) Field notes from participation in the schools and from walking around in Birmingham and Madrid
- 2) Interview transcripts and notes
- 3) Secondary material, such as newspaper articles, reports, statistics, handouts etc.

Combining these types of data I was able to compare and cross-check information, verify findings and assure reliability – a process most often referred to as triangulation (Bryman 2008:379).

In ethnographic research, data collection and analysis is an on-going and dialectic process. It takes place at different stages, and as described by Taylor and Bogdan (1984), it can be seen to include three processes: 1) the on-going discovery of emerging themes which guides further data collection, 2) the coding of data and creation of typologies, and 3) the contextualisation of findings (p.130). In my research the three main types of data: field notes, interview transcripts and secondary literature were used at all three stages.

The field notes were regularly reviewed during the fieldwork and prompted both new questions to be asked in interviews and new areas to observe in the field. After the fieldwork had ended, the notes were carefully re-read and written up on computer. They were coded in a process of open coding (Corbin and Strauss 2008:195) and entered into NVivo as free nodes (Gibbs 2002:31). Some of the field notes related to the methodological process and have been used for this chapter. Others were empirical notes, which have been used to contextualise the analysis and triangulate the findings.

The interview transcripts and notes were similarly reviewed during the fieldworks and informed the development of the data collection. They were coded and entered into NVivo as free nodes. In addition to breaking up the interview transcripts into different codes/nodes, the transcripts were however, also kept parallel in their original format in order not to miss the context of the whole conversation, in which the quotes were said. When relevant, contextual information about the participants or the interview situation has been included in the analysis.

Following the initial open coding of the field notes and interview transcripts, the themes discovered were further analysed, mainly using the techniques of comparing and

asking questions (Corbin and Strauss 2008:69-78). I carefully compared the content of each code/node and considered differences and similarities in what the young people said and did. Simultaneously, I began to ask questions to the data, exploring the meanings that the young people gave to different concepts and searching for explanations as to why differences and similarities might exist. Along with the themes and concepts, brought up by the young people themselves, these comparisons and questions have shaped the structure of the analysis chapters.

Concepts do not always travel easily and in comparative cross-national research, language is therefore something to be particularly aware of (Mangen 1999:111-113). Acknowledging this, all interview transcripts were coded in their original language. It was only during the writing up process that I translated the Spanish interview quotations, and all efforts were made to translate them as accurately as possible. In some cases, Spanish expressions have remained untranslated because of the difficulties in finding parallel expressions. Some of the quotations are furthermore not completely grammatically correct, but reflect the way they were said originally in Spanish. For references, all original quotations can be found in the endnotes. In all the interviews, words that appear in brackets have been added by me to facilitate understanding.

To supplement my observations and interviews, a vast amount of secondary literature was collected before, during and after the fieldwork. Reports and statistics were found in local or university libraries, and relevant parts were copied and filed. Newspaper articles were cut out of papers and accessed through the Internet from newspapers (mainly *El País* and *The Guardian*) and more specialised magazines (e.g. *Si, se puede*, *Magisnet*). In addition, I gathered a significant amount of informal material at the schools, for example handouts given to students in class and lesson plans. All these documents were read and notes were taken of relevant points. Similar to the data collected through observations and

interviews, the secondary literature was used to prompt conversations and questions during the fieldworks, and to make me aware of concepts and typologies used in the two settings. Most importantly though, the secondary documents were invaluable in the process of getting to know and comparing the two national and local field contexts.

2.5. Summary

This chapter has described the research design and the methods applied in the project. It has illustrated how research contexts present limitations and possibilities for the application of methods and it has discussed the methodological choices made throughout the project as a result. Finally, it has considered issues of reflexivity and described the process of data-analysis. The aim of the chapter has thus been to make the research process as transparent as possible and to make explicit the relationship between my research questions and the particular methodological design or practice, including a detailed description of how the application of each method was shaped by the contexts in which the research took place.

Chapter 3: Context and setting

Urban anthropological research is situated within both national and local frameworks, and any fieldwork must be seen in the context of the time in which it is carried out. This chapter discusses these different levels of context. The first three sections of the chapter focus on the national level, and describe the educational systems, the history of migrants and minority ethnic groups in England and Spain, and the educational conditions of these groups. The fourth section looks at the city level and gives a more specific and localised description of the social and educational situation of migrants and minority ethnic groups in Birmingham and Madrid. Finally, the last section describes the local neighbourhoods and the schools in which the fieldwork took place, focusing on the social characteristics of the area, the backgrounds of the students, the lay-out of the schools, and the general structure of the school day. Firmly locating the fieldworks in their geographical, political, social, and to some extent historical context, this chapter thus provides the background for understanding each of the two fieldworks on their own, as well as the relation and comparison between them.

3. 1. The national contexts I – Education in England and Spain

3. 1. 1. Education in England

The general structure of the contemporary English school system dates back to the 1944 Education Act, in which education was divided into primary and secondary schooling, and free education for all was extended to include secondary schooling (Walford 1990:127-128). This act functioned as the legal basis of educational provision until 1988 (Alban-Metcalf 1998:386), when a new, radical, and highly controversial Education Reform Act was passed by the then conservative government (Walford 1990:129). The Education Act

brought with it a number of major changes, two of which have had particular relevance for the educational situation of minority ethnic groups.

One major change was the introduction of a national curriculum (ibid:128). This curriculum identified a number of core and foundation subjects that all pupils were to learn and specified how to assess them by standardized testing at the end of each key stage¹⁴ (HMSO 1988:2). The test results of individual schools were to be published in league tables, which could then function as a guideline for parents in choosing a school for their children (Alban-Metcalf 1998:387).

A second major change introduced by the Education Reform Act was in relation to admission policies. Schools were no longer to maintain an ‘artificially determined’ intake of pupils, which automatically gave them their ‘fair share’ of students. Instead they were to compete for their pupils and the funding they received would depend on their enrolment numbers (Walford 1990:138). Parents were at the same time given almost complete control over the school-choices of their children (Paterson 2003:167) and the above mentioned league tables therefore came to play a crucial role in the competitiveness of schools.

As critics have pointed out, the increased competition between schools and the expansion of parental choice introduced by the Education Reform Act had some rather unfortunate implications for educational equality (Ball and Troyna 1989; Walford 1990). Standards became the main priority and ‘troublesome’, ‘disruptive’ or ‘unmotivated’ pupils became increasingly avoided by schools, fearing that they would bring down competitiveness (Tomlinson 1997:69-70). This meant that ‘free choice’ was not always available to those students who were deemed ‘less desirable’. At the same time parental choice offered “white parents a legitimate means of avoiding schools with high intake of

¹⁴ Compulsory schooling in England is divided into four ‘key stages’: Key stage 1: Year 1-2, Key stage 2: Year 3-6, Key stage 3: Year 7-9, Key stage 4: Year 10-11

ethnic minority students” leading to ‘white flight’ and increased segregation (ibid:67; Tomlinson 2008:112-113). Competition, choice and focus on standards therefore did not seem to benefit the situation of the more vulnerable groups in society, and what was presented as ‘colour-blind’ market policies had some significant implications for minority ethnic groups (Gillborn 1997b; Tomlinson 1997).

Nevertheless, competition, choice, achievement and standards remained key issues in the educational policy of the subsequent New Labour government, which took over in 1997¹⁵. Parallel to this, an increasing focus on standards and targets, as well as individualised and personal learning became a central part of policy (Paterson 2003; Smithers 2007:8; Tomlinson 2001). One expression of this was the recommendation that schools set or stream their pupils.

School age and class composition

Compulsory education in England begins at the age of five and lasts until sixteen. It is divided into primary and secondary schooling, and most pupils transfer from primary to secondary school at the age of eleven. At the end of each school year, students automatically progress to the next year. Only in very rare cases is it decided that a child will benefit from either having an extra year in the same class or skipping a year. Most often such students are, however, given differentiated teaching or additional support within the class of their year group (Eurydice 2007/2008: 24; 193).

¹⁵ In May 2010 a new coalition government between the Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats was formed in Britain. A recently published white paper (Department for Education 2010) sets out the changes to education proposed by the government, among others: review of the national curriculum, a rising of the age to which young people are expected to be in education, increased autonomy and freedom for schools and a pupil premium aimed at deprived students. At the point of writing this thesis, it is, however, too early to make any conclusions about the implementation and impact of these changes.

Students can be divided in a number of ways within the different year groups. They can be grouped by general ability (streaming), taught in mixed-ability groups, or grouped in each subject according to their subject specific ability (setting). The last practice is the most common (ibid:173), but the majority of schools use a mixture of setting and mixed-ability classes. 92% of all 15 year old students are thus in schools that teach in both sets and mixed ability groups (OECD 2007:14-15).

Types of schools

The majority of children and young people in England (91%) attend state-maintained schools (DfES 2004:7). These are all funded by public means, they follow the national curriculum and they are regularly inspected by Ofsted¹⁶. Most of them are comprehensive, which means that they are non-selective and accept pupils regardless of their ability. However, a number of grammar schools, which select their pupils by ability, exist in some specific areas of the country, including Birmingham. The majority of state-maintained secondary schools are mixed in terms of gender, and are non-religious (ibid:30,47). Nevertheless, religion is taught as a GCSE subject, and schools are in principle obliged to carry out collective acts of worship “wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character” (Teachernet 2011a)¹⁷. In addition, approximately a third of all state-maintained schools are faith schools, of which 98% are either Church of England or Catholic (Teachernet 2011b).

State maintained schools fall into four categories: *Community schools* (62.1%), *Foundation schools* (16.6%), *Voluntary controlled schools* (3.3%), and *Voluntary aided schools* (16.3%) (DCSF 2008a:11). All of these are, as mentioned, paid for by public funds

¹⁶ The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills; a government body that inspects educational institutions and report on their standards according to a number of fixed measures (www.ofsted.gov.uk).

¹⁷ This practice is, however, not always complied with, as discussed in several newspaper articles (e.g. Melville 2011; Press Association 2006).

through the Local Educational Authority, but the degree to which the Local Authorities controls the administration varies (Eurydice 2007/2008:55-56). In addition to these four main types of state-maintained schools, there are a significant number of semi-private secondary schools, and finally, England has a number of independent and fully private schools, rather confusingly referred to as *public schools*.

The many different kinds of schools within English education reveal a complex educational system, and performance tables and achievements show some important variations between government-run and independent schools. Some of the most significant differences are, however, found within the individual schools (Smithers 2007:24-25).

The end of Year 11 and post-compulsory schooling

At the end of Year 11, pupils in England are entered for the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) exams. There are no set rules for how many or how few exams a student can be entered for and the final grade is often awarded on the basis of both exams and coursework. Grades range from A* to G, and students who do not obtain a G will not be awarded a certificate (Eurydice 2007/2008: 194).

After compulsory schooling, students have the option of continuing onto college to do their A-levels or a BTEC diploma, or they can choose to do an apprenticeship. A-levels are courses, which last two years and can be taken in approximately 80 subjects. 14 of the 80 subjects are taught in a subsection of the A-levels: Vocational Certificate of Education (VCE), formerly known as Vocational A-levels. This type of A-levels is meant to prepare students both for the world of work and for higher education (QCA 2010). In order to be admitted to A-level courses, colleges generally require a minimum of five GCSE passes at grades A*–C and some colleges furthermore require a minimum grade of C in English and Maths (Directgov. 2011).

The BTEC diploma is an alternative to the A-levels. It is a work related qualification, which aims both to accommodate the needs of employers and to allow progression to university. The BTEC diplomas can be taken parallel to, or in place of the GCSEs and A-levels in schools and colleges. The diploma is not based on exams, but on real-life, work-based case studies and the completion of projects and assessments (Edexcel s.a: 3).

Apprenticeships are another type of post-compulsory education, which is meant to prepare students for work. They are based on a combination of work practice and studies and can ultimately provide the student with a National Vocational Qualification (NVQ). An apprenticeship usually takes between one and three years, but it depends on the employer and the profession in question. Even though the main aim of apprenticeships is to gain access into a vocational profession, it can also be used as a way to enter higher education.

Since universities and colleges set their own rules for entry, their admission requirements vary greatly (Directgov 2010). Most higher education institutions do, however, require applicants to have a number of A-levels or VCEs (QCA 2010). A-levels and VCEs are also, by far, the most popular post-compulsory schooling choice among young people in England (DCSF 2009:16).

3.1.2. Education in Spain

Similar to the English educational system, Spanish education has gone through a number of profound changes in recent decades. Some of these have been related to the more general changes which took place in Spanish society following the reinstatement of democracy in the 1970s. Others have developed as a result of the competing ideologies of the country's two main political parties: the conservative Partido Popular (PP) and the Socialist Party (PSOE) (Calero 2006:22-24). In general, Spanish education has, in around half a century, changed from being elitist, exclusive and mainly based on private schools to being almost

universal and based largely on state financed schools (ibid:19-20). In addition, a number of more specific and often rather complex developments have taken place. A complete account of these would be beyond the scope of this chapter, but two major developments should be mentioned, as they are important for the context in which the fieldwork took place.

The first development is the decentralisation of education, which began in the 1980s and increasingly has divided educational responsibilities between the state and the country's autonomous communities. In the present version of this system, the state is in charge of the general organisation and planning of education and defines a minimum of requirement for schools. The autonomous communities, however, have responsibility for the practical administration of the schools, the public spending in the educational area, and the development of more specific educational plans and measures, including provision for migrant children (Eurydice 2006:2).

The second major development is the introduction of compulsory school age up to sixteen years in 1990 (prior to this, compulsory school age was fourteen years) and the creation of compulsory secondary schooling. This extension was part of the socialist government's attempt to equalise education by making it more comprehensive (Calero 2006:19,23) and it has shaped the composition of the contemporary Spanish school system in important ways.

School age and class composition

According to present Spanish law, education is free and compulsory for all children and young people up to the age of sixteen. Compulsory schooling is divided into two: *Educación primaria* (primary schooling) and *Educación secundaria obligatoria*, (compulsory secondary schooling - abbreviated ESO). Primary schooling covers children

from six to twelve years and compulsory secondary schooling covers young people from twelve to sixteen. However, students are required to repeat the school year, if they do not pass their exams, and therefore these year groups do not always match reality. Students are allowed to repeat one year in primary school and two years in compulsory secondary school (Eurydice 2006:4). Figures show that especially at the end of compulsory secondary schooling repeating rates remain rather high, and at fifteen, only around 2/3 of the students in Spanish schools are in a class corresponding to their age (Calero 2006:32). Students can, thus, very well have reached the age of seventeen or even eighteen when completing compulsory secondary schooling.

Within the schools, students are not usually set and they have all their classes as a group. Students with difficulties may, however, be placed in a special two year programme called *Diversificación Curricular*. This group is taught according to a special curriculum and is smaller than the regular class. Still, at the end of compulsory secondary schooling they are awarded a graduation certificate similar to their peers in the regular class (ibid:49) and have the option to continue to upper secondary education.

Types of schools

Primary and compulsory secondary schools in Spain fall into three categories:

- 1) *Centros públicos* (Public Centres)¹⁸ that are free of charge, financed by the autonomous communities, have a competitively elected staff and are ideologically neutral and secular,
- 2) *Centros privados* (Private Centres), which are privately owned by specific institutions or associations, may charge fees and can have an ideological and religious orientation, and

¹⁸ Not to be confused with the English term 'public schools' which, in fact, means private schools. Since public centres in Spain can be run both by the autonomous community, the state and the local government it is not completely correct to call them 'state-schools' and in this thesis, they are therefore termed 'public centres.'

3) *Centros concertados* (Subsidized private schools), which have a more ambivalent status. On the one hand, they are privately owned, employ their own staff and may, like private schools, have an ideological orientation (many of them are Catholic). On the other, they are financed by public means and therefore obliged to fulfil certain conditions, similar to those of state schools. Most importantly, they are required to keep the school free of charge, respect all faiths, and adhere to state rules of admission (Aja 2000:79).

In the school year 2009-2010, 67.3% of all primary and secondary schools were public centres, approx. 7% private, and approximately 26% subsidized private schools (MED 2010:6). The Spanish educational system is thus, as mentioned above, largely financed by public means. The public financing of the subsidized private schools however, has in recent years been the focus of frequent debates and criticisms, especially because of the schools' admission policies. These admission procedures are often irregular and enable the schools to avoid low-income family children (including migrant children). In this way they play a part in upholding differences between social groups (Calero 2006:55,79; Del Olmo 2007:193).

Post-compulsory schooling

Students who wish to continue studying after completing compulsory secondary schooling, have the options of continuing either to the *Bachillerato* (General Post-compulsory Secondary Education) or to the *Formación profesional específica de grado medio* (Intermediate Specific Vocational Training). Both options consist of a two-year programme, but their content and aims are different. The *Bachillerato* programme is organised around four kinds of learning: Arts, Natural and Health Sciences, Humanities and Social Studies, and Technology and its purpose is to prepare students for University, for the *Formación profesional específica de grado superior* (Advanced Specific Vocational

Training) or for the job market (MECD 2002:44). The alternative, Intermediate Specific Vocational Training, is instead organized into training modules and directly aimed to allow students to undertake practical work or continue on to Advanced Specific Vocational Training (ibid:49).

Students who do not complete compulsory secondary schooling and therefore cannot continue to post-compulsory secondary schooling programmes are given a certificate of school attendance, which gives them access to another type of educational programme – *Programas de garantía social* (Social Guarantee Programmes). These programmes are designed to improve basic skills and prepare the students for work (Eurydice 2006:5; Teese *et al.* 2006:11).

3.1.3. The English and Spanish educational system in comparison

As this brief overview of the English and Spanish educational systems shows, both countries have undergone significant developments in regards to education in recent decades; England towards marketization and liberalization, Spain towards more decentralisation and universal coverage. The comparison between them shows some important commonalities: most notably the existence of a similar system of primary and secondary school divided at year 6, compulsory schooling until age 16, a diversified school system with a risk of increased segregation, and a relatively similar set of post-compulsory schooling opportunities consisting of an academic and a more vocational branch. The systems, however, also present some important differences, most significantly the practice of setting in England and the system of repetition in Spain. These commonalities and differences provide an important background for the comparison of migrants and minority ethnic groups in school. However, before looking at the situation of migrants and minority

ethnic groups in English and Spanish schools, a more general description of their history and conditions in the two countries is required.

3. 2. The national contexts II - Migrants and minority ethnic groups in England and Spain

3. 2.1. Minority ethnic groups in England

According to the most recent British National census from 2001, 4.6 million people (or 7.9% of the British population) belong to a minority ethnic group. Ethnicity in the census is monitored by using the categories: '*White*' (British, Irish, White other), '*Mixed*' (White and Black Caribbean, White and Black African, White and Asian, Other Mixed background), '*Asian or Asian British*' (Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Other Asian Background), '*Black or Black British*' (Caribbean, African, Other Black) and *Chinese or other Ethnic group*. Minority ethnic groups are defined in the census as those who do not belong to any of the white categories. Using this terminology, the largest minority ethnic groups in England are Indians (1.8% of the population), Pakistanis (1.3% of the population) and Black Caribbean (1.0% of the population) (National Statistics 2001).

Because most available data use the categories and figures set out in the national census, these will also be applied in this chapter. They do, however, present some problems. First of all, the categories used to monitor ethnic background, mix concepts of 'race' (black, white), geographic origin (Asian, Chinese, etc.) and ethnicity (other ethnic group) and build on preconceived assumptions about the 'race' of people from specific geographic origins. The category Black Caribbean, thus, reflects the way Caribbean affiliation has been connected to black skin, even though not all Caribbeans coming to the UK as immigrants were black (Block 2006 citing Peach 1996). In addition, the connection made between 'non-whites' and minority ethnic groups results in the invisibility of white

minority ethnic groups (Aspinall 2002:809). Finally, the categories used do not make it possible to distinguish between people that are newly arrived in the country and those who have been settled for generations. As we will see, such inter-group differences are of significance, especially in relation to schooling and educational experiences.

Secondly, the national census is only carried out every ten years, and this thesis is submitted just before the 2011 census. Therefore it has to rely on information from the 2001 census even though significant new migration movements have taken place since, most importantly from Eastern Europe. Low skilled labour migration from non-EU countries has been further restricted and the majority of new arrivals to the UK are therefore white (Ensor and Shah 2005:7). In addition, it seems that migrants arrive to Britain from an increasingly diverse range of countries, with equally diverse experiences and reasons for migrating (Berkerley *et al.* 2006:34). The ethnic make-up of the minority population may, consequently, have changed significantly since the 2001 census was carried out. This further supports the case made above, that categories need to be differentiated and developed in order to obtain an adequate picture of ethnicity in Britain¹⁹. Furthermore, it highlights the need for a dynamic approach which takes into account both historical and contemporary developments.

A historical background of migration and migration policies in England

Migration has played an important role in Britain for many centuries (Block 2006:45-49) and several of the groups, which today figure as the main minority ethnic groups were already present before the Second World War (Herbert 2008:13). Due to the high number

¹⁹ The need to develop and revise categories is supported by a government consultation (ONS 2007) on the National Census 2011. In the consultation report, concerns are raised about issues relating to ethnicity in the census, among others, the need to include more groups under the larger categories, such as 'White other' and 'Asian', and the importance of revising some of the existing categories, such as 'Mixed heritage'.

of migrants arriving in the late 1940s, 1950s and 1960s England is, however, most often considered a country with post-Second World War labour migration.

By the end of the British colonial rule, the 1948 British Nationality Act granted all British Citizens (also those born in the former colonies) the right to enter, work and settle in Britain with their families (ibid:16). Britain was experiencing a severe shortage of labour due to increasing industrialisation and the need to rebuild the country after the war. Combined with economic, social and political distress in the countries of origin, migrants thus began to arrive from the former colonies of South Asia and the Caribbean. In the early phases of immigration, the majority of migrants were men, many of them hoping to accumulate savings by working in Britain and later returning to their country of origin (Brah 2006:38). Caribbean men were, however, soon followed by an almost equal amount of women, and Caribbean families were set up within a relatively short period after the initial arrivals (Abenaty 2003:19).

The early Caribbean and South Asian migrants were most often forced to settle in run-down working class areas, characterized by a number of social problems, such as housing shortages, inadequate social services, high levels of unemployment and poor educational facilities. Although these social problems were present prior to the arrival of migrants, they became increasingly associated with immigration (Brah 2006:36-37). The press began to use migrants as scapegoats, and as public concern with the presence of the Caribbean and South Asian population grew so did violence against them (Block 2006:51). As migrants established families and had children, additional issues, such as the numbers of Asian and black children in schools, were further added to the public debate (Brah 2006:37).

In the 1960s, as racial prejudice and anti-immigration sentiments grew, the government came under pressure to restrict especially black immigration (ibid:37). In 1962, the first of a number of immigration acts was passed by the then Conservative government (1959-

1964), limiting admission of Commonwealth immigrants to those who had an 'employment voucher' (Sales 2007:140). Rather than slowing down migration, the Act in the short run had the opposite effect as many migrants were prompted to 'beat the ban' and bring their relatives (Miles and Phizacklea 1984: 40; Abbas and Anwar 2005:54). This changed the composition of specifically South Asian immigration, since the previous predominantly male migrants were replaced by families, settling in Britain on a permanent basis (Herbert 2008:17).

Based on the argument that the growing numbers of immigrants had a negative effect on race relations, restrictions were continued by the Labour government, that came into power in 1964 (Sales 2007:141). Increasing concern with integration and race relations, however, also led to the passing of the first Race Relations Act in 1965, outlawing discrimination in specific public places and making it illegal to publish material with incitement to racial hatred (Alibhai-Brown 1999:57). Furthermore the idea of multiculturalism was introduced by Home Secretary Roy Jenkins in 1966, who spoke about integration as an approach based on equal opportunity, cultural diversity and mutual tolerance. Nevertheless, the attempts of the Labour government to create consensus in the area of race relations were seriously challenged by anti-immigrant right wingers like Enoch Powell (Sales 2007:141).

In response to increasing anti-immigration sentiments, the government introduced a new Commonwealth Immigration Act in 1968, which only allowed entry to those Commonwealth citizens whose parents or grandparents had been born in Britain. This was likely to include only white Commonwealth citizens, and in practice the act therefore introduced restrictions on the basis of racial discrimination (Joly 2001:43). In the same year a more extensive Race Relations Act was also passed, making it unlawful to discriminate in housing and employment. However, the timing of the act to some extent suggests that it

was introduced as a way to counter criticism over the Immigration Act passed shortly before (Alibhai-Brown 1999:58).

In 1971 further restrictions on immigration were introduced by the Conservative government (1970-1974) removing most of the remaining Commonwealth privileges and making entry into Britain dependent on work permits (Miles and Phizachlea 1984:69). The Labour government, which followed (1974-1979), similarly continued immigration control policies, but also strengthened race legislation by introducing the 1976 Race Relations Act and making racial discrimination illegal (ibid:94-95).

In the late 1970s and 1980s the Conservative government of Margaret Thatcher profoundly challenged race relations and concepts of multiculturalism with its “neo-Powellite view on Englishness and British history” (Alibhai-Brown 1999:67). Further immigration restrictions were introduced and rules for citizenship were changed, by removing the automatic *jus soli*. In addition, stricter rules were applied to men and women marrying British citizens, a measure directly aimed at stalling the practice of arranged marriage by South Asians (Brah 2006:50).

During the 1990s, immigration control continued to be seen as in crisis and following New Labour’s election into government in 1997, the party therefore attempted to promote an agenda towards immigration, which both focused in control and on acknowledging the contribution of immigrants to economic and social life (Sales 2007:164-165). Asylum seekers became a key element in the government’s aim to control immigration and as their numbers rose, their rights were slowly withdrawn (ibid:145-148). The government enforced strict controls in order to prevent ‘ingenuine’ refugees from ‘abusing’ the immigration system. At the same time immigration policies were put in place to ensure that Britain would benefit from immigration. Labour-immigrants were divided into high-skilled and

low-skilled categories, and this status affected not only their rights to enter the country, but also their time of settlement and integration opportunities (Ensor and Shah 2005:13-14).²⁰

Running in parallel to these restrictions, certain attempts have been made in recent years to improve the standing of non-white minority ethnic groups already living in the UK. In 2000 The Race Relations Act from 1976 was amended and a new general duty was imposed on public authorities to promote race equality (Abbas and Anwar 2005:62). However, on top of this, prompted by events, such as the ‘race riots’ in Bradford, Burnley and Oldham, 9/11, and the 2005 London Bombings, a growing concern with the conditions of minority ethnic groups and their relation to the society in general has developed. Multiculturalism has come under increasing criticism, and arguments have been made that, rather than promoting peaceful coexistence, this approach has, in fact, allowed the country to ‘sleepwalk into segregation’ (for a description of these trends, see Finney and Simpson 2009:4-6,116-119). Developing out of this concern, the concept of community cohesion has gained prominence, and parallel to this, discussions of ‘Britishness’ have come to increasingly dominate debates on minority ethnic groups, in particular regarding Muslims (Cheong *et al.* 2007:32).

In addition, recent developments seem to have shifted the political and public opinion, not only away from multiculturalism and towards ideas of community cohesion, but also away from the focus on racial or cultural differences towards a more explicit focus on values and religion. As pointed out by Kundnani (2007) “What had before been interpreted as a problem of Asians living in separate cultures has, since 9/11, been taken to be a problem of Muslims living by separate values” (Kundnani 2007:30). The question of values

²⁰ The present coalition government between the Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats has announced a number of additional measures to stall immigration, among others a controversial cap on skilled non-EU immigrants and a reduction of non-EU students coming to the UK to study lower educational programmes. At the point of writing this thesis it is not yet possible to make conclusions about the effect of these changes.

is, however, necessarily very complex and furthermore only a part of what influences the present situation of minority ethnic groups in Britain.

Minority ethnic groups in present-day Britain

According to national figures, the composition and situation of non-white ethnic groups differ from that of white ethnic groups in a number of ways. Given the large variations between non-white ethnic groups and the multiple situations of people within both white and non-white ethnic groups, caution should, of course, be made not to essentialise or simplify such findings. For the purpose of understanding the more general situation of minority ethnic groups within British society, a few main trends are however useful to bear in mind.

In terms of geographic location, non-white minority ethnic groups are predominantly concentrated in urban centres and 45% of all non-white people live in London. After London, The West Midlands and Birmingham in particular, has the largest concentration of non-white minority ethnic groups (National Statistics 2001).

Age-wise, non-white minority ethnic groups tend to be younger than white ethnic groups. Whereas the percentage of under-16s in the white ethnic groups is between 10% and 20%, this number is significantly higher in some non-white ethnic groups: Mixed (50%), Bangladeshi (38%), Pakistani (35%), Other Black (35%), and slightly higher or similar in others: Indian (22%), 'Other Asian' (23%), Black Caribbean (20%), Black African (30%), Chinese (18%) and 'Other ethnic group' (19%) (National Statistics 2001).

Data on the labour market situation of the different minority ethnic groups furthermore show some concentration around certain industries and employment types. These vary from group to group, but in general minority ethnic groups tend to be over-represented in low-paid and insecure jobs (Parekh *et al.* 2002:192-193). In addition, evidence points to the fact

that individuals from black and Asian communities have to be better than their white competitors to get a competitive post, and well-qualified people are met with substantial discrimination in the labour market (Platt 2007:68-75). This phenomenon is often referred to as ‘the ethnic penalty’ and even though not all minority ethnic groups experience it to the same extent there is, according to Platt and others, significant evidence that minority ethnic groups in general, do not get appropriate returns for their qualifications (Anwar 2000:60-61; Platt 2007:xi, 70). As discussed in chapter 1, this may have an influence on schooling strategies.

3.2.2. Foreign citizens and migrants in Spain

According to the latest figures from the Spanish National Institute of Statistics (INE), Spain has almost 14% foreign population and the largest national groups of foreign citizens are from Romania, Morocco, and Ecuador (INE 2010). The countries immigrants come from are, however, increasingly diverse (Cachón 2003:233), and statistics show that the three largest national groups mentioned above are followed closely in numbers by other national groups (INE 2010).

The two categories most often used in Spain to describe people coming from other countries are *extranjeros* (foreigners) and *inmigrantes* (immigrants). Even though these two terms sometimes overlap and are, in fact, often used interchangeably, they mean quite different things and the way in which they are used in statistics and other publications can be rather confusing. The term ‘foreigner’ is a legal term and includes all people who do not have a Spanish citizenship. When immigrants obtain Spanish citizenship they therefore no longer figure as foreigners, but people who are born in Spain with another passport do (Colectivo IOÉ 2005:34). They count for around 5% of the ‘foreign population’ (INE 2010). The term ‘immigrant’ is not a legal term, but describes a decision made by a person

to come to Spain and settle for a short or long period of time. This category therefore also includes Spanish people returning from abroad, a group that until 1993 was more numerous than the number of foreign citizens coming to live in the country (Arquer 2005:67). Similarly, the immigrant-category includes people coming to Spain with a double citizenship, for instance some Latin American groups (Carabaña 2006:276).

Contrary to England, mass migration into Spain is still a relatively recent phenomenon, and therefore it is difficult and perhaps also a bit premature to conclude anything about how immigrant groups will constitute themselves as ethnic groups. Nevertheless, there are a number of non-migrant minority ethnic groups in Spain, most significantly the Roma population. The size of the Roma community is even more difficult to determine than the number of migrants and foreign citizens, because minority ethnic groups born in Spain do not figure separately in any statistics, but it is estimated to be around 700,000, corresponding to approximately 1.75% of the Spanish population (Etxeberria 2002:291-292). In addition to the Roma population, a number of other regional and linguistic sub-groups within Spanish society may be considered as minority ethnic groups. The status of these groups is rather controversial from a political point of view, and to describe their complex situation would be outside the frame of this chapter. None of the students interviewed in this project were from a Roma background, nor did they belong to any of these regional minority ethnic groups. In this chapter, the focus is therefore on the history and situation of immigrants (excluding Spanish citizens returning from abroad) and foreign groups in Spain.

A final issue, specifically related to determining the number of immigrants living in Spain, is the question of illegal immigration. Immigrants need to register themselves in the municipal register in order to obtain social services, and therefore most immigrants, also those in irregular situations, figure in these records. The total number of irregulars can,

however, only be considered an estimate for several reasons. First of all, only the number of people immigrating into the different municipalities is recorded, and not the number of foreign nationals leaving. Secondly, there is a rather high tendency among foreigners to change locality, and this leads to a higher risk of duplicating their municipal inscriptions. Finally, the names of some groups of foreigners are often misspelled or can be spelled in different ways and therefore duplications of their names might not always be detected. Thus, the number of irregular migrants figuring in the Municipal registers is likely to be an over-estimation (Arquer 2005:50-51).

As a consequence of some of the points made above, the exact number of immigrants and foreign citizens living in Spain can be difficult to determine. Nevertheless, it is beyond doubt that both groups have grown dramatically in recent years and that the ethnic composition of the country's population has changed quite significantly within a rather short period.

A history of migration into Spain

As often mentioned by migration scholars, Spain has, in the last few decades, changed from being a traditional country of emigration to constituting one of the new immigration countries of Europe. Attempting to understand the characteristics and implications of this development, Cachón has distinguished three main phases in the establishment of 'Immigrant Spain': The time previous to 1985, the years 1985- 2000, and finally from 2000 to the present (Cachón 2003:221; Cachón 2008:220-222).

In the first phase, previous to 1985, the number of immigrants in Spain was still relatively small. Most of them were in the country as workers in foreign companies, political refugees, or pensioners, and 65% of them were Europeans. The year 1985, however, constituted a turning point in Spain's immigration history and the beginning of

the second phase, since it initiated what Cachón calls 'new immigration'. This 'new immigration' was characterized by the increasing number of individuals coming from Africa, Eastern Europe and Asia, often with a different religion than the majority of the population, and mainly with economic motives. Contrary to previous immigrants, many of them were, furthermore, easily identified because of their physical appearance (Cachón 2003:222-223).

1985 was also, as pointed out by Aja and Arango (2006), the year in which Spain got its first law concerning foreigners (Aja and Arango 2006:13). This year can therefore be seen as a turning point in more than one respect. The law was related to an awakening awareness of the growing number of foreign nationals in Spain, but should also be seen in the light of Spain's entrance into the EEC in 1986 (Aja 2006: 20-21). The fear that Spain would become a transit country for migrants wanting to settle in Europe, prompted the European Community to demand Spanish legislation in the area of immigration. The law was, thus, meant to limit immigration, not so much into Spain as to other European countries. This illustrates that in the mid-1980s, immigration was still seen as a phenomenon mainly affecting Spain's European neighbours, rather than Spain itself (De Lucas and Torres 2002:11).

Even though a number of national immigration plans and migratory politics were developed in this period, Spanish border controls remained relatively weak and the number of immigrants coming illegally into Spain continued to increase. To deal with this, a number of 'regularizations' were put in place in the 1990s. According to various authors, these regularizations lead to a certain 'foreign immigration culture', based on the idea that the best way to be granted a residents permit was to enter the country illegally and become regularized at a later point (Medina 2006:135-136; Pérez 2004:11). The existence of such a

‘culture’ seems to have some support from statistics, which show that 90% of all foreigners in Spain have gone through a period of irregularity (Arquer 2005:72).

From around 2000, immigration began to be institutionalized in a previously unknown way. That year therefore marks the beginning of the last of Cachón’s three phases (Cachón 2003:226-231). Issues related to immigration are now increasingly brought up in the media and discussed in public debates, and the presence of immigrants in Spain is accepted as more than just a passing phenomenon (Aja 2006:27). Furthermore, immigrants have become socially visible and multicultural neighbourhoods have developed in larger Spanish cities. (De Lucas and Torres 2002:8). People’s everyday lives are beginning to be affected by the presence of immigrants, and immigration has become an important issue in politics (Cachón 2003:231).

Since 2000, a number of laws and amendments have been introduced, reflecting that the concern with immigration and integration has made its way into politics. As critically pointed out by De Lucas and Torres, immigration has at the same time been converted into an electoral trick. This process has had several negative consequences, most importantly the linking of immigration to crime, the ‘culturalization’ of the political debate, and the stigmatization of cultural difference (De Lucas and Torres 2002:12-16). In general, the two main political parties have had a very different approach towards immigration. Whereas the conservative Partido Popular traditionally has focused on issues of control and limitation, the Socialist party has shown more concern for the conditions and social integration of immigrants (Solé 2004:1218-1219). A significant change in the approach towards immigration can therefore be seen after the socialist government took over from the conservatives in 2004 (Cachón 2008:222).

Among the Spanish population, immigration is also viewed with increasing concern (CIS 2007), and xenophobia and race related crimes have risen in recent years (Blasco *et al.*

2006:145, Lacomba 2005), particularly after the onset of the global recession (Bárbulo 2010). Several commentators have linked these developments to the biased representation that immigration receives in the Spanish media, focusing on illegal immigrants, using sensationalist language and linking immigration to crime (Cea D'Ancona 2007:18-23; García 2006). It must, however, be kept in mind, that not all types of immigrants are regarded with equal concern. As opinion polls show, Spanish people generally tend to look favourably upon migrants from Western Europe and Latin America, and less favourably upon migrants from Africa (particularly Morocco) and Eastern Europe (particularly Rumania) (Cea D'Ancona y Valles Martínez 2009:325-328; Injuve 2008:21-22). This highlights the importance of understanding both the general situation of migrants in the Spanish context and their diverse backgrounds and positions.

Characterizing migrants in Spain

Migrants in Spain predominantly live in three types of localities: large cities with a developed service sector (Madrid, Barcelona, Valencia), agricultural areas (Murcia y Almería), and some costal zones with tourist activities and related construction developments (Colectivo IOÉ 2008:46). In general, migrants are located in certain neighbourhoods within these areas and live in poorer housing conditions than the majority population. The housing situation of migrant families is, however, also dependent on their time of stay in Spain, showing important differences between communities (ibid:90-91).

As in England, the age structure of the migrant population is young. More than half of the migrant population is between 20 and 39 years old, but a considerable group (14%) is below 15 years of age, showing that a significant amount of migrants have decided to stay in Spain for a longer period, and therefore have brought their children (ibid:41-42).

Finally, since large-scale immigration into Spain is a relatively new phenomenon, it is difficult to determine whether there is an ‘ethnic penalty’ in the Spanish occupational market, similar to the one found in England. Most immigrants work in unqualified and lower-paid jobs in the agriculture, construction or service sector (Aparicio Gómez and Tornos 2000:7), but due to the recentness of migration it is not totally clear what kind of jobs their children will have. However, based on a study of Moroccan, Peruvian and Dominican 2nd and 1.5 generation²¹, Aparicio (2007) found evidence that children of immigrants from these groups continue to hold low-value, low-paid jobs and that there is a lack of connection between their educational levels and employment status (p. 1179).

In addition to these general trends, it is important to acknowledge the diverse experiences of the different migrant communities. As argued by Colectivo IOÉ (2000) it is necessary to develop a framework, which can analyse the situation of migrants without describing them, on the one hand, as complete individuals, all with their own unique experiences, or on the other, as a single homogenous group (p. 62). In their analysis of migrant groups in Spain they highlight the importance of a number of parameters; linguistic background, religious worldviews, degree of historical links between Spain and the country of origin, legal status, closeness of the community and social networks, and the socio-economic situation of the different immigrant groups. Discussing the impact of these different parameters, they show how some immigrant groups, mainly Europeans and Latin Americans, according to most parameters, are in a more favourable position than others, mainly Africans and Asians (ibid:62-66). A similar pattern is revealed if educational level is added to the framework. Europeans and Latin American immigrants tend to have relatively high educational level, whereas immigrants from other parts of the world have an

²¹ Using the definition of Aparicio 2007, the concept of 1.5 generation refers to young people who have migrated with their parents at an early age and undergone most of their primary socialisation in the host country (Aparicio 2007: 1170). In a publication by Portes *et al.* (2009) this is defined as before 12 years of age (ibid:2).

educational level significantly lower than the Spanish population (Cachón 2003: 243). As I will discuss in the analysis, this last parameter of educational level, as well as several of the other parameters mentioned by Colectivo IOÉ, have an important impact on young migrants' schooling experiences and life-projects.

3.2.3. Migrants and minority ethnic groups in England and Spain in comparison

As the above has shown, England and Spain provide an interesting background for a comparative study of migrants and minority ethnic groups. First of all, both countries have a relatively large number of people with migrant or minority ethnic background, and the topics of immigration, diversity and 'national values' figure prominently on the political agenda. This may shape the way in which young people of migrant or minority ethnic background see themselves within the two societies. Major differences between the two countries, however, include the legal framework for immigration, which in England is much stricter than in Spain and limits the existence of irregular migration, and the recentness of migration into Spain, which is in stark contrast to the relatively long tradition of migration into Britain. Whereas most migrants in Spain are first or 1.5 generation, minority ethnic groups have been present in Britain for much longer and many minority ethnic youth are children or grandchildren of immigrants. Consequently there are very different traditions and ways of dealing with diversity. As the analysis will show, this plays an important role in the educational context.

3.3. The national contexts III - Migrants and minority ethnic groups in education

3.3.1. Migrants and minority ethnic groups in English schools

In England, around a fifth of all students in state-maintained secondary schools are from a minority ethnic origin²² (DCSF 2009:2) and the proportions of the different ethnic groups are as follows: White British: 78%, Other white groups: 3.9%, Mixed: 3.3%, Asian: 7.7%, Black: 4.3%, Chinese: 0.4%, and any other ethnic group: 1.1%. Looking at the subgroups, the most numerous are Indian (2.5%), Pakistani (2.9%) and Black African (2.4%) (ibid: Table 4). As mentioned earlier, the minority ethnic categories do not distinguish between recently arrived pupils and those who were born in England. Therefore, another figure worth mentioning is the number of pupils who are either known or believed to have another language than English as their first language. In secondary schools, this number is 11.1% (ibid: Table 5).

The distribution of minority ethnic pupils in different geographic locations, quite naturally reflects the country-wide distribution of minority ethnic people in general, and as noted earlier, this is rather uneven. In the Birmingham area, which formed the basis of my fieldwork, between 30% and 50% of pupils come from a minority ethnic background, depending on the local area (DfES 2005:5). Most minority ethnic students attend state-run schools and there is certain evidence of segregation, albeit with a significant degree of variation across both localities and ethnic groups (Burgess and Wilson 2004).

The history of minority ethnic groups in English schools

Since the initial migrants who came from the Caribbean islands and South Asia in the early 1950s, as previously mentioned, often came alone, it took a while before families were

²² Defined in the DCSF publication (2009) as students from any other category than 'White British' (p.2)

established and black and Asian children began to enroll in English schools in significant numbers. It was also therefore only in the late 1950s and 1960s that British educationalists began to consider the issue of ethnic diversity (Gillborn 1997a:375; Modood and May 2001:306).

Within English schools, the initial approach towards children of minority ethnic origin was most often assimilation and the cultural backgrounds of the children were seen as a disadvantage, which had to be overcome (Abbas 2004: 9; Mason 2000:68). The children were given language support, and if there were more than 30% minority ethnic children in a given school, the Department for Education and Science recommended that they were bussed to other schools (Tomlinson 2008:30; Troyna 1993:24). The fundamental assumption behind this approach was that the educational system presented a model of meritocracy and opportunity, into which minority ethnic children were to be adjusted. Minority ethnic parents, however, became increasingly dissatisfied with the way their children were schooled and as awareness of the ethnocentric nature of the British school system grew, “issues of cultural identity now began to assume importance, and strategies designed to foster positive cultural identities amongst the young came to be seriously considered” (Brah 2006:39).

Increasing resistance from minority ethnic groups combined with the failure of the educational system to live up to its meritocratic ideals led to a gradual shift towards multiculturalism (Mason 2000:69), which by the 1970s rose “like a phoenix out of the ashes of mono-cultural education” (Troyna 1993:25). Cultural differences were no longer to be considered a ‘problem’ or a disadvantage, but instead they were to be valued and explicitly acknowledged (Mason 2000:69). It was believed that minority ethnic children, by learning about their own cultural and ethnic roots, would improve their chances of educational success and that learning about other cultures would diminish prejudice and

discriminating attitudes among children (Troyna 1993:25). Schools were encouraged to introduce multicultural programmes, but as these often focused on the most marginal parts of the curriculum, (religious festivals, food and music), they were criticised for being nothing more than ‘saris, samosas, and steelbands’ (Troyna and Williams 1986:24). Critics pointed out that multiculturalism could not challenge the underlying assumptions of underachievement as a result of individual deficiencies (Abbas 2004:10), nor the central issues of racism within society (Modood and May 2001:308).

This criticism was linked to a more general, but growing concern with the concept of institutional racism, which had recently become part of race legislation. The idea that schools were an integral part of creating and upholding institutional racism in society, formed the basis for an anti-racist approach, which held that the curriculum should be ‘de-racialised’ and that anti-racism should be explicitly taught in schools (Abbas 2004:10). Rather than seeing racism as an individual phenomenon, anti-racists thus held that it was part of the institutional make-up of the society and rather than celebrating cultural differences, they focused on racial differences and the way that they upheld inequality (Modood and May 2001:308). During the late 1980’s and 1990’s, minority ethnic issues, however, came to play a smaller role on the political agenda. Funding for multicultural or anti-racist initiatives was increasingly removed (Abbas 2004:11; Tomlinson 2008:114) and the market-like policies, which developed from the 1988 Education Reform Act had, as earlier mentioned, some rather serious implications for minority ethnic students (Gillborn 2005:494; Parekh *et al.* 2002:155-157).

As previously described, research has shown that discrimination still takes place within English school. The achievement gap between minority ethnic groups and majority ethnic groups has been lessened, at least for some groups, but it has not been closed (Gillborn and Mirza 2000; Strand 2007). Figures furthermore show important variations between

different minority ethnic groups. Chinese, Mixed White/Asian and Indian pupils are among the highest achieving minority ethnic groups and all three groups achieve significantly higher than national average. Black Caribbean pupils, particularly boys, however, achieve significantly lower, and Pakistani, Black African, 'Other Black' pupils and Mixed White/Black Caribbean pupils similarly have rather low levels of achievement in comparison to other groups. Within all groups girls achieve considerably higher than boys (DCSF 2006/2007: 3; National Statistics 2001).

Statistics show that, to some extent, these differences can be related to socio-economic status. In England, this factor is often measured in relation to the proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals²³, and figures from the Longitudinal Study of Young People in England show that the groups with the lowest proportions of pupils entitled to free school meals are White British Pupils and Indian. Compared to these two groups, twice as many Black Caribbean children are entitled to free school meals, three times as many Pakistani and African Pupils and almost five times as many Bangladeshi pupils (Strand 2007:32). Some groups are more likely than others to draw on state service, and therefore free school meals may not be the best way to measure poverty (Archer and Francis 2007:10). Nevertheless, the figures can give a general idea of the significant differences in income levels among minority ethnic groups and show that they correspond to some extent with the achievement differences mentioned above.

The low achievement levels of some minority ethnic groups continue to create concern among educationalist and policy-makers. A number of attempts have therefore been made to raise achievement, many of these specifically aimed at black Caribbean boys (e.g. Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant, Aiming High, Black Boys Can and The London Challenge).

²³ Children whose parents are on certain benefits or income supports may receive free school meals. For a list of benefits entitling families to free school meals see:
http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/Parents/Schoolslearninganddevelopment/SchoolLife/DG_4016089?cids=Google_PPC&cre=Education_Learning_Franchise (last accessed 09.12.10)

The focus of these initiatives is predominantly issues of achievement and targets. Within more general school policies, a more ideological or abstract preoccupation with ‘community cohesion’²⁴, ‘Britishness’ and citizenship has however also developed in recent years and the role of schools in identity creation is increasingly debated. At the legislation level this has led to the introduction of citizenship education in 2002, and an obligation being put on schools from September 2007 to promote community cohesion²⁵. A certain shift thus seems to have taken place, moving away from celebrating differences towards searching for a more common ground. Nevertheless, a number of policies and practices, which focus on diversity and the diverse needs of different communities, have remained in place. Schools have for many years celebrated Black History Month during October, and the Race Relations (Amendment) Act has, since 2000, obliged schools to assess the impact of their policies on minority ethnic pupils, staff and parents. This has included issues of dress code, amongst others, and schools are generally expected to show sensitivity to the needs of different cultures, races and religions, for example by allowing Muslim girls to wear appropriate dress and Sikh boys to wear traditional headdress (Eurydice 2004:54). Initiatives relating to ethnic diversity are, however, often taken by the local educational authorities or the individual schools, and there might therefore be some local variations (Eurydice 2004).

²⁴ According to the Institute for Community Cohesion, Community Cohesion can be seen as a development of the concept of multiculturalism, in which the emphasis on separateness and differences is counterbalanced by the creation of interaction and commonalities (<http://www.cohesioninstitute.org.uk/Resources/AboutCommunityCohesion#2001> last accessed 15.12.10).

²⁵ In the 2007 Guidelines on Community Cohesion, three main ways are mentioned for schools to promote community cohesion: 1) through the teaching, learning and curriculum, 2) by providing equal opportunities for all and removing barriers to access and participation, and 3) by engagement and extended services aimed to build positive relations between children and young people of different backgrounds (DCSF 2007:8). The duty to promote Community Cohesion is currently being revised by the coalition government, who is considering to abolish it (Shepherd 2010).

3.3.2. Migrants in Spanish schools

Parallel to the rising numbers of migrants coming to Spain in recent years, the amount of students with a migrant background has, quite naturally, also risen substantially. According to statistics from the Educational Ministry, the number of 'foreign students' has increased from 460,518 in 2004/2005 to 762,746 in 2009/10 (MEC 2010:7). As previously discussed, the number of foreigners does not correspond exactly with the number of immigrants, but nevertheless, the figures show a significant rise.

In the first *Ley de Extranjería* (law of foreigners) from 1985, only foreign residents with a residence permit were allowed to attend Spanish schools. In 1996, this right was extended to include all children and young people in school age, and at present migrant children and young people have the right to a free education, regardless of their legal status (Paterna 2006:251). This right is usually complied with and children of migrants without papers do not seem to encounter major problems enrolling in Spanish schools. In fact, it is argued, that the school may be one of the institutions most accessible to immigrants (Colectivo IOÉ 2000:48). Nevertheless, this does not imply that children of irregular migrants encounter no problems at all in relation to schooling, and a certain link has been established between irregularity and problems at school (Pozo Serra and Ten s.a:15).

Spanish schools do not measure achievement in relation to national or ethnic background (Abajo and Carrasco 2004:40), and therefore other indicators must be used when trying to obtain an impression of the educational situation of migrant children. One such indicator is the length of stay of young people of immigrant background in the educational system, and the percentage of a given group, which is in full time education after the age of 16 (Aparicio 2007:1175). Being in education after age 16 is, however, not always an indicator of continuance into higher education. Young people may still be in compulsory schooling at that age due to repetition (Aparicio and Tornos Cubillos s.a: 61)

and on the basis of age alone it is therefore difficult to conclude anything about the way migrant students perform and progress in school. Still, international data shows that both first and second generation migrants in Spain achieve less than 'native' students in maths, language and science. Research also shows that migrant students of both first and second generation repeat school years to a significantly larger extent than 'natives' (Jiménez and González 2009:27; 41-42).

Foreign students are, to a large extent, concentrated in public centres (82% in 2006/2007 according to MECD 2008) and there is furthermore a tendency for migrant children and young people to be concentrated in specific public centres. This is mainly due to two developments: the 'natural concentration' of migrants in certain living areas and therefore also in the schools of these areas, and the 'artificial concentration' caused by autochthonous families withdrawing their children from public centres and enrolling them in the subsidized private schools (Aja 2000:83).

Even though the number of foreign and migrant students in Spanish schools has risen quite dramatically in recent years, there are still rather few references to this group of students within national political legislation. In the most recent Organic Law of Education from 2006, they figure only briefly in the chapter 'Students with specific educational support needs' under the headline of 'Late entries into the school system.' (BOE 2006: 17180). Foreign and migrant students are, thus, approached from a certain deficit perspective, focusing on compensation and disadvantage. This approach has been criticised both for its insufficient attention to diversity but also for its tendency to focus on deficiency (Teasley 2004), which overlooks the fact, that a significant number of immigrants actually arrive at school with a higher educational level than their average Spanish counterparts (Del Olmo 2007: 201). Nevertheless, the current *Plan Estratégico Ciudadanía e Integración* (Strategic Citizenship and Integration Plan) 2007-2010 responds to some of the previous

lack of attention to migrant students, putting quite a lot of focus on education of migrant children and ways in which social integration can be improved within the schools (MTAS 2007: 210-231).

Within the schools themselves, the main approach towards foreign and migrant students is frequently criticised for being assimilatory, mono-cultural and compensatory (Aguado *et al.* 2006:59-61; Aguado and Malik 2001:154; Aparicio Gómez 1999:9; Bochaca 2006:270-1; Zuffiaure 2006:412-413). However, whereas this was the only approach until very recently, an attempt to treat diversity in more intercultural terms seems to be gaining terrain (Bochaca 2006:262; Del Olmo 2007:190), and the intercultural educational discourse, emphasising “interaction, communication, negotiation, reciprocity, dialogue, mutual responsibility and mutual enrichment among cultures” (Aguado and Malik 2001:150) is growing increasingly popular. Still, there is a tendency to direct intercultural programmes mainly at migrant students rather than at the school population in general (Cachón 2007:48).

3.3.3. Comparing the situation of migrants and minority ethnic groups in English and Spanish schools

From this brief description of the situation of migrants and minority ethnic students in English and Spanish schools, it is evident that the recentness of migration into Spain plays a significant role in the approach of schools in Spain. English schools have a much older tradition of dealing with diversity and even though commentators have criticised recent developments in educational policies, diversity is, as I will discuss later in this thesis, integrated into English school life in a very different way than in Spain. Spanish legislation at present shows very little attention to migrant students, but there is a growing awareness of interculturalism within schools.

3. 4. The local contexts – Birmingham and Madrid

3.4.1. Birmingham

Birmingham is England's second largest city, with a population of just under 1 million. It is an ethnically diverse city, and around 30% of the city's population come from a minority ethnic group. The single largest minority ethnic group in Birmingham is the Pakistani community, which accounts for 10.65% of the city's population, followed by the Indian (5.71%), the Black Caribbean (4.90%), and the Bangladeshi community (2.13%). In addition, the city has a number of smaller non-white ethnic groups, most notably the Chinese and Black African, and finally, there is a notable White Irish population (3.22%) (National Statistics 2003: 70). The largest minority ethnic groups are, thus, those related to the initial groups of migrants coming from South Asia and the Caribbean, but over the years they have been followed by more recent arrivals from Eastern Europe, Africa and the Middle East, some of whom have come as refugees and asylum seekers (Abbas 2006b:5). 80.96% of the population in Birmingham was born in England and only 13.42% outside of the EU. More than half of the people belonging to the non-white minority ethnic groups were born in Britain (BCC 2006a).

In terms of religion, the majority of Birmingham's population is Christian (59.16%). The second largest group is Muslim (14.33%), followed by 'No religion' (12.44%), Sikh (2.93%), Hindu (1.98%), Buddhist (0.30%) and Jewish (0.24%). 8.39% did not state their religion (BCC 2006b).

The ward and district profiles of the city show a certain level of residential segregation, partly due to the historical settlement patterns of migrants. As Birmingham became an important industrial area in the period following the Second World War, it also became a popular destination for different groups of post-war migrants, who settled in various 'zones of transition'. Many of the initial migrants and their descendants, however, stayed in these

neighbourhoods. This explains why minority ethnic groups today are still largely concentrated in the inner city areas (Abbas 2006b: 2), and why some inner city areas have a proportionally large number of specific minority ethnic groups.

As a city, Birmingham has a rather distinct feeling of diversity. Walking around it one meets an impressive amount of different people, and when looking at shops, public advertising, magazines sold in news agencies and the languages in which books are offered in libraries, one gets a sense of an established presence of minority ethnic groups. Minority ethnic groups are also well-represented within local politics (Garbaye 2002:563, 567) and issues of diversity and equality have a relatively established role on the local political agenda. Nevertheless, noticeable socio-economic differences remain between ethnic groups in relation to a number of factors, such as housing, health, employment and education (Abbas and Anwar 2005).

The education of minority ethnic groups and migrants in Birmingham

In Birmingham, non-white minority ethnic groups make up 43.5% of the school population. The largest groups are Pakistani (17.9%), African Caribbean (6.9%), Indian (6.5%), Bangladeshi (3.8%), Mixed Race (4.3%) and Chinese (0.3%) (Warren and Gillborn s.a.: 4). The remaining white group, constitutes 56.5%, but since it is not divided into sub-groups it is impossible to know how many are from white migrant or minority ethnic groups. As can be seen from these figures, the proportion of minority ethnic groups of school age is significantly higher than the general national and city average. This again illustrates the rather young age distribution among many minority ethnic groups.

Significant variation exists between the different wards of Birmingham in relation to educational achievement (Abbas 2006b:13). The inner city areas are the most affected by low educational performance, a fact that must be seen in light of the relative deprivation of

these areas. However, since minority ethnic groups tend to be overrepresented within these areas, this has important implications for ethnic equality.

In an attempt to compensate for some of the disadvantages that minority ethnic groups experience in education, various community groups in Birmingham offer supplementary education (ibid:14). Neighbourhood variations do, however, still highlight the ever-present question of equality of opportunity.

The local Birmingham neighbourhood²⁶

The neighbourhood in which the fieldwork was carried out is a residential neighbourhood, dominated by low semi-detached houses and apartment buildings. It is located outside of the city centre and therefore it is not one of the neighbourhoods most often studied in relation to ethnic minorities. In terms of ethnicity, the area, however, corresponds quite well with the city average, with the only difference of having a slightly bigger Pakistani and Irish population (approximately 3% and 1% above city average) and the remaining groups consequently smaller.

The area is relatively similar to the rest of the city on most other social indicators, except for a few noteworthy differences. First of all, the educational level of the population is well above city average. Deprivation is lower and using the rather rigid measure of ‘social grade’ the population is also slightly more advantaged. These demographic and social tendencies are, however, not necessarily directly linked to the general population of the school where the fieldwork was carried out, since only around a fifth of the students come from the local neighbourhood. Approximately 40% came from another neighbourhood, which is among Birmingham’s most deprived, and this was reflected by the

²⁶ In order to assure anonymity (see section 2.1.3.) references have been omitted from the two sections describing the local neighbourhoods in Birmingham and Madrid.

fact that almost half of the student population was eligible for free school meals. The same neighbourhood has one of the lowest educational levels of the city, again affecting the school population (BCC 2006c).

3.4.2. Madrid

The city of Madrid²⁷ is the capital of Spain. It has around 3.3 million people and according to the municipal register from 1st of January 2009, 17.5% are foreign nationals (Madrid Datos 2009:2). The largest foreign national groups in the city of Madrid are from Ecuador (16.5%), Romania (10.5%), Bolivia (7.5%), Peru (7.2%), Colombia (6.5%), China (4.8%), Morocco (4.1%), Dominican Republic (4.1%), Paraguay (3.5%), Brazil (2.9%), Italy (2.8 and Bulgaria (2.3%) (Madrid Datos 2009:7). As can be seen, Latin American groups constitute by far the largest communities of foreigners.

In general, the foreign population of Madrid is distributed around the city, and, as argued by Giménez Romero *et al.* (2007) residential segregation does not exist as such. Nevertheless, some districts have significantly more immigrants than others and some of them also have a certain concentration of a specific community (ibid:51; Madrid Datos 2009:8-9). Furthermore, according to a *Barómetro de Inmigración*, which covers the whole community of Madrid, approximately twice as many foreigners as Spanish people have regular contact with foreigners in their family and friendship circles, in their neighbourhood and at work (Comunidad de Madrid 2008:1-3). There does, therefore, seem to be some divisions, if not at the residential level, then at least at the social.

The presence of migrants, and in particular Latin American migrants, is quickly sensed when arriving in Madrid. The numerous *locutorios* (phone shops, which also often include

²⁷ The city of Madrid (ciudad de Madrid) consists of 21 districts all located in the city itself. This is different than the community of Madrid (Comunidad de Madrid), which includes both the city and surrounding areas.

an Internet-café) advertise cheap calls to most Latin American, African and Eastern European countries, and many shops display an impressive amount of Latin American products (Latin American cheese, Ecuadorian bread, maté, etc). The metro stations exhibit a range of posters from companies offering money transfers to Latin America and Eastern Europe. And an increasing amount of ‘ethnic’ restaurants have begun to compete with the more traditional Spanish restaurants.

At the institutional level, the presence of migrants in Madrid and their diversity is illustrated by the number of organisations, cultural centres, events and services aimed at migrant communities.²⁸ At the time of the fieldwork, fourteen centres for migrants had been opened by the community of Madrid, providing computer access, Spanish language classes, legal aid, etc. In addition, Spanish could also be learned at the public libraries, which offered weekly classes. Finally, a range of debates and events involving different migrant organisations illustrated the activity of migrant communities in Madrid. Since my fieldwork took place at the same time as the 2008 general election, the major focus of these debates were, not surprisingly, migrants’ right to vote and the more general use of migrants in electoral debates.

Politically, Madrid has a conservative majority. The Partido Popular won the majority of the votes in the election of 2008, even though the national government continued in the hands of the socialists. The decentralised character of the Spanish educational system means that the political orientation of the community has a significant influence on educational developments. Educational provision for migrants is decided at local level and is therefore in Madrid largely dependent on decisions made by the conservative party.

²⁸ An overview of some of these can be found in the ‘Guia 2006: Recursos para la Inmigración de la Comunidad de Madrid’ and in the English ‘First step guide for immigrants’, both published by the Comunidad de Madrid (www.madrid.org).

Migrants in the schools of Madrid

In the autonomous community of Madrid, 13.7% of the students are foreigners (MED 2010:7). Most of these (approximately 76%) are concentrated in state-schools (MECD 2010:82), reflecting the previously mentioned national tendency.

Immigrants, who already know Spanish and have no significant curricular disadvantage, are placed in a regular class corresponding to their educational level and age. There are no special measures or services available for this group. To deal with immigrant students coming to Madrid without any knowledge of the Spanish language or with a significant 'curricular gap' (*desfase curricular*), the community of Madrid has, however, developed the *aulas de enlace* (bridging classes). These classes are part of a wider programme, the *escuelas de bienvenido* (welcoming schools), which was begun in the 2002/2003 school year. The programme is meant for immigrant students in the last years of primary schooling and secondary schooling. It aims to strengthen their linguistic skills and to facilitate their integration into the Spanish school system. The classes usually have a maximum of 12 students per class (García Fernández *et al.* 2009:15-16).

Overall, 139 bridging classes have opened up in the city of Madrid so far and in the school year 2007/2008 these classes had a total of 1436 students. The bridging classes are placed within the regular schools and in Madrid 60 of them are located in subsidized private schools and the remaining 79 in Public Centres (DAT-Madrid 2008).

The bridging class programme is a significant improvement on earlier practice, but as pointed out by commentators, it does have a number of weaknesses. First of all, the time that students are allowed to stay in the class is limited to nine months (previously six months), even though the time it takes for individual students to integrate sufficiently and learn the language may vary significantly. Secondly, bridging classes are not present at all schools, and therefore students may have to change school after completing their stay in the

bridging class. This works against the aim of integrating the students into the school environment (Quicios y Miranda 2005:4-5). Finally, in line with criticisms of the general national approach to migrant students, it has been argued that the compensatory education, which the bridging classed are part of, “contains the risk of blaming the victim rather than locating the responsibility for the problem within the educational system” and that the model is “not compatible with intercultural education, because it does not appreciate the culture of the immigrant or ask for any change to mainstream educational institutions or society” (Permisán and Fernández 2006:212). This point will be discussed further in the analysis.

In accordance with the national trend, the largest number of foreign students in Madrid is situated at the primary school level (59,991 in 2008/2009). In secondary schools, the amount of foreign students is smaller (approximately 39,172 in 2009/2010), but still significant in relation to the other educational levels (Comunidad de Madrid 2010:82). The proportion of immigrants moving on to upper secondary schooling or intermediate education is rather small however. Only about 6% of the students doing a *Bachillerato* and Advanced Vocational Training are foreigners. And at university level, the number of foreigners is even smaller (2.8%). Contrary to this there is an evident presence of migrants in the Social Guarantee programmes²⁹, where around 30% of the students are foreigners. (Giménez Romero and Lores Sánchez 2007:31). The relatively small number of foreigners at the higher educational levels can be due to the fact that most young foreigners in Madrid have not yet reached university age. Their relative overrepresentation in the Social Guarantee programmes, however, seems to suggest that they experience significant disadvantage in terms of educational outcomes.

²⁹ Educational programmes for which no educational qualification is required (see p. 80)

The local Madrid neighbourhood

The neighbourhood in which the fieldwork took place was a working class neighbourhood a little way out of the centre of Madrid. It was developed during the 1950s and 1960s as a result of large numbers of internal migrants moving to the city from the countryside of Spain. Later, in the 1970s and 1980s, the area came to suffer from a great deal of social problems, but recent developments have improved it significantly. Still, it retains some of its bad reputation among people in other parts of the city.

At present, the district in which the neighbourhood is situated has a population of around 150,000. Almost 60% of them were born in the area, illustrating that of those coming in the 1950s and 1960s, many have had children and grandchildren, who have remained in the neighbourhood. Approximately 14% of the local residents are foreign citizens, which places the district a little below average in relation to the remaining 20 districts of the city of Madrid. Similar to the rest of the city, the two largest national groups of foreign citizens in the district are from Ecuador (21.8%) and Romania (12.5%). The rest of the foreign population does, however, reflect a high degree of diversity and is comprised of around 40 different nationalities. Furthermore, the age structure of the district is relatively young.

Approximately 45.5% of the districts' children and young people in compulsory school age are enrolled in public centres, 40.5% in subsidized private schools, and 14.0% in private schools. Looking at the specific figures for foreign students, however, the distribution is somewhat different, as 65% are attending public centres, 33% subsidized private schools and only 1% private schools. The average proportion of foreign students in the local public centres is, thus, remarkably higher, than in the two other kinds of schools. In addition, a number of public centres, including the one in which the fieldwork for this project took place, are placed well beyond this average.

3.4.3. Birmingham, Madrid and the local neighbourhoods in comparison

Madrid and Birmingham are both multicultural cities with a substantial amount of migrants or minority ethnic groups. The groups which reside in the two cities are, however, rather different, reflecting both the English and Spanish national trends and the local characteristics. In addition, Birmingham as a city seems to pay more attention to diversity, and it is clear that the city has a longer tradition of migration. Large variations within the cities also highlight the importance of looking at the local neighbourhood level in order to contextualise the fieldwork, especially in Madrid, where most of the students were local, and reflected the predominantly working-class background of the area. In the school in Birmingham, students came from a number of neighbourhoods and their individual backgrounds may therefore have had more relevance than the specific neighbourhood in which the school was placed.

3.5. The school level

In an article on newcomers in Finnish secondary schools, Gordon *et al.* (1999) distinguish between three different layers of the school; the official school (the curriculum, the structure of the lessons, the formal hierarchies within the schools and the disciplinary apparatus), the informal school (the more informal hierarchies and the social interaction that takes place within the school) and the physical school (the space and embodiment, which is part of the school). The following description of the two schools, which formed the basis for the fieldwork, mainly addresses the two most easily observable layers, the official and the physical. Both these layers do, however, to a certain extent influence the third layer, the informal one. As I will discuss in the analysis, this layer was given high importance by the students involved in the research. The comparison between the physical

and the formal layers of the two schools is therefore not only interesting contextually but also necessary as a prerequisite to understand the background for the data collected.

3.5.1. The school in Birmingham

The school, which was the basis for the English part of the fieldwork, is a comprehensive, secondary community school with around 600 pupils in the age of 11-16. It is a performing and visual arts school, which influences both the variety of classes offered and the orientations of the students. The students at the school come from many different ethnic groups, the four largest ones being Pakistani (approximately 30%), white British (a little over 20%), Bangladeshi (around 10%) and black Caribbean (around 7%). The remaining third of the students came from a variety of origins, including Mixed Heritage, Indian and African. The school is also mixed in terms of gender, but there is a majority of boys, primarily due to the school's geographic location next to a large girl school. Around half of the students in the school have a language other than English as their first language and there is a significant number of pupils, who have recently arrived to the UK.

The school building itself is big, with class rooms located on all three floors of the building. At the centre of the school, there is a large assembly hall, which is used for assemblies, performances, evening events and lunch-time detention. On this floor there is also a library, which is frequently used, and a school cafeteria where meals can be bought at lunch time. Going out from the centre and located in the various corridors are the different class rooms. These are designated for specific subjects and there is usually one teacher responsible for each. Some classrooms are, however, shared by several teachers and used for a number of subjects. Attached to the school are three main outdoor areas: a large school yard, a smaller school yard and a playground area.

The school has a very multicultural feeling. Both pupils and teaching staff are very ethnically diverse and around the school, art projects or posters, which point to the diverse nature of the school, are exhibited. At the time of my visit these included posters by the students with words written in Arabic script and a variety of non-English languages, a project exhibition about India with text and pictures, posters about 'Black Britain' and the achievements of different black people in history and finally, displays of poems, written by students and mainly describing identity issues.

A day at the Birmingham school

A day at the school in Birmingham begins at 8.50 in the morning and ends at around 3 pm. Many of the pupils arrive before 8.50 and hang out in the outdoor area, since it is not possible to enter the school. They all wear the same uniforms, girls and boys alike, even though some Muslim girls combine the traditional uniform with a headscarf and *salwar kameez*³⁰ in the same colour as the general uniform.

When the bell rings, the students can enter the school and they go to their designated form groups. All students belong to a form group and a form tutor. The groups are formed on the basis of academic ability or on the need of the students to improve in a specific subject. In the form group the students are registered and given any important information there may be. The form group lasts until 9.05, where the students go to their respective classes.

The pupils have a mix of compulsory and elected classes and during a school week, the pupils in Year 11 attend 46 different classes (25 different subjects, of which some are divided into sets, as explained in section 3.1). Each class is in a different room and the

³⁰ Traditional South Asian clothing

students therefore move from room to room during the day. During classes most doors are locked and it is not possible to move around the school without a pass.

In most compulsory classes the pupils are divided into five sets, according to ability whereas in the elective classes they are usually not. The lowest set (set 5) is a mix of students with special educational needs and student who have poor English skills, and most often there is a teaching assistant assigned to this group. Except for one white British boy, everyone in this set was from an Asian origin at the time of the fieldwork. Once a week students from this set went to a college outside of the school or attended Motor Vehicle classes within the school. The same students had a subject called 'Key Skills' twice a week, which the rest of the students did not have. This class dealt with practical issues such as job interviews, the setting up of a business, taking a mortgage, etc. The highest set similarly had some special provision, as a part of them went to a college to receive math classes.

Students, who recently arrived to the UK or for other reasons have English as an additional language, receive supplementary English classes, based on their individual needs. The school thus follows what is generally termed an 'integrated model' (Eurydice 2004:41). At the time of the fieldwork, there were five different groups of EAL-learners, who had a weekly number of English classes depending on their level. EAL students would have the rest of their classes with their year group, but they would often be placed in one of the lower sets.

The students have five classes a day and two breaks in between; a shorter break after the second period and half an hour lunch break. Because of the size of the school the students do not all have lunch break at the same time, but instead in three different groups, which vary from day to day. At the end of the day, the pupils return to their form groups. Here they are registered again by their tutor and unless some of them have detention after school, they are allowed to go home at around 3 pm. Many students do, however, hang out

around the school and chat for a little while before leaving. Some of them also stay and participate in the various after school activities that the school offers.

3.5.2. The school in Madrid

The school in Madrid, in which the fieldwork was carried out, was a secondary public centre, which provided courses at both compulsory secondary level and non-compulsory 'bachillerato' – level (the latter both day and evening classes). In addition, the school had a bridging class. In the school year 2007/2008, the school had a total of around 400 students during the day, of whom approximately 65% were at the compulsory secondary school level. According to the school statistics, almost 40% of these students were immigrants, and around 2.5% Roma.

The students categorised as migrants came from a variety of countries, and there were around 20 different nationalities at the school. Reflecting the national and local tendencies, the single largest group of immigrants at the compulsory school level were from Ecuador, counting for around 30% of the total number of immigrants. In the class, where I was situated, the majority of foreign students were, thus, also from Ecuador. In total, the class had 24 students, of whom eleven were from a Spanish background, nine from Ecuador, one from Colombia, one from the Dominican Republic, one from China and one from Ukraine. In terms of gender, there were more boys in the class than girls (fifteen and nine respectively) and age wise the students were between fifteen and seventeen years of age (with the youngest one turning sixteen and the oldest turning eighteen during the fieldwork).

In the bridging class all thirteen students were, quite naturally, migrants. Two were from the Dominican Republic (Spanish speakers but with a 'curricular gap') and the rest were from China, Nigeria, Morocco, Guinea and Romania. Gender wise, there was a larger

amount of boys than girls (eight and four, respectively), and in terms of age, they were between twelve and fifteen years.

Geographically, the school covered a large area and was composed of two main buildings with three floors. In one building were the classes of students from the first two years of compulsory secondary schooling, in the other the classes of students from the last two years of compulsory secondary schooling and from the *bachillerato*³¹. Furthermore, this second building contained a staff room, a cafeteria, a meeting room, an assembly room, a computer room and a number of offices. Close to the director's office, armchairs were placed around a little table, for visitors to sit and perhaps read one of the newspapers on display, but at break-time these armchairs were often occupied by students chatting and eating snacks.

In between the two buildings there was a large outdoor area, with three football/basketball courts, trees and benches. The whole of the school was surrounded by a high fence and the only way to enter was through one of the main entrances leading to one of the two buildings. At each entrance there was a reception, and during the school day the entry doors were usually locked. Teachers and students thus, had to ask the receptionist to open the doors in case they needed to leave during the day. Within the school, all the main doors were kept open, except during lunch-time when the students were supposed to either stay outdoors or remain at the ground floor.

Most rooms at the school had a sign on the door indicating the name of the room (teaching room, class room, toilets, assembly room, etc) in different languages (Spanish, Romanian, Arabic, Portuguese, English, and Chinese). This, I was told, was introduced at the same time as the bridging class, which had started two years earlier. Around the school

³¹ In many of the narratives of students and teachers, there was a clear distinction between these two buildings. The building where the younger year groups were situated was often described by teachers as more uncontrolled or undisciplined. As quotes later on will show, this repeated itself in the narratives of the students.

there were also several posters and drawings (mostly made by the students themselves) with messages of tolerance, non-violence and equality. Most things hanging on the walls were, however, information about local activities for young people and families (sport activities, youth clubs, etc.) and events happening at the school (exams, extra-curricular activities, etc). Finally, some notifications were put up in relation to specific yearly events. On the 'Day of the Book' (23.april) a wall mounted display made by students was hung in the main hall, featuring a number of traditional Spanish poems.

A day at the school in Madrid

The school day in Madrid began at 8.30 am and ended at 2.15 pm. The students generally entered the school when they arrived, and only a few hung out outside the school, before the bell rang. Some students went to their class rooms to sit and chat with their class mates until lessons began; others arrived at the last minute (or sometimes a bit later), and rushed to their classrooms, where they tried to slip in quietly. The students did not wear uniforms, and there were no regulations regarding jewellery, hats or other accessories. Also, most students brought their mobile phones to class and it was not uncommon to see them check the time or send text messages during lessons.

In the last years of compulsory secondary schooling the students had a mix of compulsory and elected classes. The compulsory classes included Spanish language, mathematics, social science, ethics, physical education and English, and the electives: art, biology, commerce, religion, music and French. In addition, the year group had one hour of tutorials a week, in which they were meant to talk about subjects relevant to their lives (the future, gender equality, co-existence, and other similar topics).

The students had six lessons a day, separated by a 25 minute break between the third and the fourth. This break was mostly used to meet up with friends, chat, play football or

basketball or buy a snack or drink in the cafeteria, where the lady behind the counter quickly served the large number of shouting students hitting their coins at the counter to attract her attention. At the side of the counter, the teachers patiently waited for the students to be served, so that they could have their coffee or tortilla.

In the 4th cycle, where I spent most of the fieldwork, there were two groups – one with 24 students and one with 14 students. The larger of the two (where I did most of my participant observation) was further divided into a regular class and a group of students in the *diversificación curricular* programme. The *diversificación curricular* group consisted of eight students, but only six of them came regularly to class. Their curriculum covered more or less the same topics as that of the regular class. The compulsory subjects were, however, composed in a different way³² and the group had a subject called ‘transition to adult life’, which focused on helping the students find out what they would like to do in their future life, which options they had, and how they would be able pursue them. Besides their main subjects, the *diversificación curricular*-group spent English classes, physical education, tutorials and some elective classes with the regular group.

For the regular group all compulsory classes were spent in their own classroom. This was a large room with capacity for around 30 students. The tables were placed so that two or three students sat together facing the teacher. Most often, the students remained at the same place every day. A few posters were hanging on the wall, describing the Spanish educational system and showing a map of Europe. The students had also drawn all the European countries and stuck them to the wall as part of a Europe project they had recently carried out.

³² The group had two main classes called ACT - *Ámbito Científico Tecnológico* (which included maths and science) and ASL - *Ámbito Sociolingüístico* (including Social Studies and Language).

In the bridging class, which was a bit further down the hall, the lay-out of the room was significantly different. Almost all of the walls were covered with maps of Madrid and Europe, tourist posters from Spain and China, a chart of the Spanish educational system and the different options of vocational training, drawings made by students, and human bodies cut from paper naming the different parts of the body in Spanish. Around the room small notes were put, for example on the black board and the table, which had the Spanish name of these objects written on them. The Spanish ABC hung behind the teacher's desk, and finally, an emergency plan, translated into all the languages of the class, were placed on one side of the room. It was the only class room in the school, except for the computer room, to have a computer and an internet connection. In addition, the room had a TV and a Video/DVD player.

Students in the bridging class had most of their classes together. However, in line with the goal of integrating the students into the school, they also gradually attended lessons together with a regular class of their age level, following a 'separate transitional model' (Eurydice 2004:42).

At the end of the school day, most students left the school relatively quick. Some walked home, others caught the bus and only a few stayed to chat outside the school gates. At four o'clock the school opened again for a variety of extra-curricular activities. A number of sports activities were offered, mainly basketball and football, and there was a possibility for students to come and do their homework. For students from the bridging class special help with language and math was offered twice a week, but only four of the students regularly made use of it. This extra teaching was carried out by a tutor, employed by the immigration council, and specially contracted at the school to deal with immigrants arriving without any prior knowledge of Spanish. The extra-curricular activities ended around six o'clock.

3.5.3. The two schools in comparison

The two schools in Birmingham and Madrid, which formed the basis for the research, had a number of things in common. They were both state-run secondary schools located in residential areas of large cities, and both had a multi-ethnic school population. The way this multi-ethnicity was dealt with within the schools was, however, rather different. In the school in Birmingham, both students and staff were from a wide variety of backgrounds, and besides being multi-ethnic, the school was also multi-religious. Many of the minority ethnic students had been born in England and were children or grandchildren of immigrants. Furthermore in the everyday life of the school, diversity and multiculturalism played a more prominent role. In Madrid, the multi-ethnic character of the school was limited to the fact that the school had a high percentage of recently arrived migrant students from a variety of backgrounds. Most of them were, however, from countries with a Christian majority, and even though the school was multi-ethnic, it was therefore not significantly multi-religious. The teaching staff consisted furthermore of almost only Spanish-born teachers, and the diverse backgrounds of the students was not significantly reflected in the day to day life of the school. This difference may have been related to the different timing of migration into England and Spain and the two cities. Caution should, however, be taken not to see the two schools as representatives of their respective countries or cities. As pointed out by Cline *et al.* (2002) some, mainly white schools in England display significantly less attention to diversity than other schools and similar variations may be found in Spain.

Other differences worth mentioning is that the school in Madrid was smaller than the school in Birmingham and that the classes were together most of the day because they were not divided into sets. Finally, recently arrived migrant students were dealt with in two different ways within the two schools and, perhaps because of the different sizes of the

school, there was a larger number of extra-curricular activities offered at the school in Birmingham.

3.6. Summary

In this chapter, the two research contexts have been described and the main trends and features of the national, local and school level have been discussed. The outline has shown that there are a number of important differences between the two sites, all of which may impact on the way that young people within them experience their life at school and make plans for the future. As I will discuss in the following chapters, the narratives of the young people in this study, however, revealed a number of significant similarities in spite of them living within such different societies and attending such different schools. Such similarities are as significant as the differences and may have important implications for the way different groups are conceptualised and their experiences understood.

Part II: Data analysis

The following three chapters present and analyse the data collected during the fieldworks. The first chapter describes the schooling experiences of the young people in Birmingham and Madrid and discusses the influences they identified as affecting them. The second explores the young people's life projects and analyses their perspectives on the different influences they believed would affect their future. Finally, the third chapter sums up the different points made in chapter four and five and compares the way the young people experienced schooling and planned for their future lives in the two national, urban and local contexts. These three chapters thus directly answer the three research questions set out in section 1.7.

As described in section 2.4, the themes presented in this chapter are either based on concepts brought up by the young people in the interviews or have been identified through comparisons and questions made in the process of analysis. Because the young people brought up different aspects of schooling and future lives in the two fieldwork settings, the themes discussed in relation to Birmingham and Madrid are not all the same. For comparative clarity, attempts have, however, been made to link the two parts together by making parallels and cross-references along the way.

All names in this thesis are pseudonyms³³. The ethnic or national background of the interviewees will only be mentioned the first time that he or she is quoted, or when it is necessary to know in order to understand the context. A full list of the participants, their ethnic or national background, their gender, whom they were interviewed with, and if they were recently arrived or not³⁴ is provided in appendix 4 and 5.

³³ Attempts have been made to give the young people names which suit their ethnic and national background, but due to my limited knowledge of some of their countries of origin, I cannot guarantee that they necessarily reflect internal differences (such as class background, tribal or ethnic belonging).

³⁴ Recently arrived defined as within 3 years or less.

Chapter 4: Schooling experiences and influences affecting them

Young people experience schooling in a number of ways, and the factors which influence their experiences, are complex and multi-faceted. In spite of this variety, there may also be a number of more general themes and commonalities in their narratives. This chapter seeks to address both. The first part of the chapter describes the schooling experiences of the young people in Birmingham and the second, those of their peers in Madrid. Both parts begin with a general description of how the young people described a ‘normal’ day at school and continue with a discussion of the different influences, which they found important in relation to schooling.

4.1: Schooling experiences in Birmingham

When asked how they experienced a ‘normal day in school’ the young people in Birmingham came up with a variety of answers. Some of them described the day according to the lessons and the times in which they were on a break. Others started out with an adjective, which they found particularly applicable: “boring,” “alright,” “stressful” or “scary.” Others again went straight on to talk about socialising, like the two girls Katie (white British) and Fawzia (Black African):

“A normal day at school; we usually arrive on time and, like, go and stand with our friends and just chat and catch up.”

The young people’s experiences of a normal day in school were to a large extent related to the social encounters taking place inside or outside of class. Thus, when asked *why* she found the school stressful, Melanie (a girl of Black Caribbean origin) explained:

The people in it make it, like, stressful as well and you have to be careful of what you say to people. What you do in lessons...

and Marlon (a boy of Mixed heritage) said that school was “alright”:

because now that we are in Year 11 we can do more stuff, and be more confident around people, because before it was like the bigger people you'd often, like, watch yourself around because you don't know them that well, because the bigger people tend to not talk so much to the younger ones.

Similarly, Jamila (a girl from an Asian background) continuously referred to the people with whom she interacted in class in her description of a day at school.

Jamila: [School is] boring, I don't like drama and I don't like PE. In drama you have to talk in front of everybody and that's embarrassing. PE I don't like, and that's it.

...

Jamila: I like English, I like maths and science. I like Key Skills, and stuff like that, I like Islamic studies. I do like the lessons, but I don't like the people.

.....

Jamila: I like maths, I just like Idriis (a boy in her class), he is fun, he is blazing all the time. That's fun. He's fun.

Finally, a number of accounts described the social interaction as almost compensating for the learning aspects of the school, as here illustrated by Benjamin (boy of White British origin):

[A normal day in school is] a little bit dull sometimes, but I am with most of my friends in the classes, so it can be all right.

The examples above illustrate a number of different ways to describe and experience a 'normal' day in school. What all of these examples have in common is, however, the importance that they give to the social environment. In most of the narratives it was thus not so much the official school or the physical school layer (Gordon *et al.* 1999), which made the young people feel a certain way towards school, but more the informal school

layer - the social aspects and the people with whom they interacted at school. This trend generally also applied to their descriptions of the influences that affected how they felt at school.

4.1.1. Influences on schooling experiences in Birmingham

The young people's discussions of influences affecting their schooling experiences revealed four main themes; friends and social interaction, the character of the school, teachers, and family. In the following sections these four themes will be discussed, beginning with the theme to which the young people themselves gave the most importance – friends and social interaction.

Theme 1: Friends and Social Interaction

Friends and social interaction were the single most important topic in the interviews and the young people spent much time talking about the various functions of friends and their role in the school context. Several of the narratives showed that having friends made a big difference to whether the young people liked the school or not. In an account of how she had been bullied in her previous school, Fawzia for example, described feelings of not having friends, and how this had affected how she felt:

“In my old school, I had a big group of friends. And everything was alright, but then by year 7 throughout, they started hating each other one by one. And then, I was just the quiet one and then they started turning on me.... and then I started just being by myself, alone in my old class just by myself.... I would just get on with it, my work, I'd do so well, I moved up sets, but it's kind of lonely, really really lonely, you don't have a person to talk to... So, I was really, really quiet.

Fawzia had left her previous school and this school was, she said much better because “the friends are nice and good”. Also her friend, Katie, conceptualised the differences between her previous and present school experiences in terms of friendships. She explained that when she was in primary school her friends were very strange and she had hated going to school. In secondary school, however, she had found that people were a lot more mature and this had also changed her feelings towards school. “It’s hard work”, she acknowledged, “but it is really nice to see all your friends, so that’s the main thing that matters”. Similarly to Benjamin (quoted earlier), Katie thus saw social interaction with friends as somehow compensating for the learning and working aspects of the school. This was a point also mentioned by Shaneece, a girl of Black Caribbean background, who described friends as an incentive to come to school:

... [having friends] *makes you actually look forward to come in to school.*

‘Cause it makes you not think about just education, you have a social life in school as well. So without social life you are just gonna be bored and think oh, everything has to do with education.

Meadow, a recently arrived girl of Black African origin, whom Shaneece was interviewed with, agreed that friends made you look forward to coming into school and she described how she had in fact not liked the school at first:

‘cause I was on my own, I was like in this shell, like, in this closed up shell and I felt alone and that no one understood me. And then all of a sudden, I don’t know how it happened, I just started settling in, at first I was really homesick, but I started settling in, all of that, and now I really love school...

Clara: *and what do you think made you like it more?*

Meadow: *I don’t know, probably the friends that I’ve made. You know the*

fact that when everyone just came together, I talk to everyone. It's like the whole Year 11 we are like so close, everyone is so close.

Having friends is, thus, closely related to well-being at school, and as both Fawzia's and Meadow's accounts point out, the opposite, not having friends, can lead to feelings of loneliness and isolation. Meadow had not been in the country for more than a few years and, similar to other recently arrived students, her school experiences had involved an initial period of settling in and home-sickness. Having come from an English speaking African country, she did, however, have the advantage of speaking English already when she arrived. Others, like Hana, who had come from the Middle East three years earlier, had experienced language as a barrier, closely connected to the issue of making friends:

Well, I was so scared because I can't speak to anyone. I didn't have any friend. I just was so bad. I didn't like the school at first. But now I like it. I like the school and the students and the teachers and all that...

Also Vanida, who had arrived from East Asia two years prior to the interview, had experienced significant social and linguistic distress on her first day of school:

"[I felt] scared, because I can't speak English. I don't know, I am scared and then someone asked me a question and I don't know what to answer. I am shy. And then I am scared for people laughing from me.

She described how her lack of English and friends had affected both the way she felt in school, but also more generally the way she felt in England. She did, however, feel better now, because as she said "my language better, and then I have friend".

As these quotations show, friends play an important role for the schooling experiences and well-being of young people, regardless of whether they are born in the country or not. For recently arrived students, there is however an extra dimension to the issue of friendship, because they often do not have a very well developed social network. The

school therefore becomes one of the most important arenas in which they can meet other people and make friends. The cases of Meadow, Hana, and Vanida clearly illustrate that the process of making friends is crucial to young migrants' well-being in school and in the society in general. They also show that language is highly significant for this process and therefore, as will be discussed in more detail in relation to the Spanish fieldwork, friendship building may take a different route for migrants who know the language upon arrival than those who don't. Before discussing the process of making friends more thoroughly it is, however relevant to explore why they are seen as so important by the young people.

The function of friends

As described by Shaneece above, friends add a social dimension to the school day. In the narratives of the young people this social dimension could both refer to having someone to do things with at break time - hanging out and chatting, or be more specialised - making a movie together, sitting in the library and play on the computer, or doing sports. Marlon, for example, wrote 'football' on one of his post-it notes on aspects influencing his schooling. When he explained the note, it did however appear that it was not all about the sport itself:

Well, when I first came to this school, it's like, there wasn't really a way to start talking to people, but when you start to play football, and, like, and then you get into other people's names and they tend to, like, talk to you more and ask you if you play football. And it'll, like, get us more friends I think. Like, the better players, even, like, us still, we were good at football when we started and that got us more acknowledged around the school and that got more friends as well.

This combination of sports and friends is significant, because it shows that boys, besides liking to play football, may have different ways of making friends and socialising than

girls. This is a difference also discussed by other youth researchers, who suggest that boys typically prefer to do activities, whereas girls like to talk (Cotterel 2007:82). Bromnick and Swallows' (2001) study on young people's values, shows that "boys still want to win money and be champions at sport whereas girls still want successful friendships, romance and close family relationships" (p.154). The way that Marlon connects football with friends, however, indicates that the two 'values' are not always as distinct as presented by Bromnick and Swallows, and that success at sport may actually be a way for boys to create successful friendships. But as the Spanish data will show, playing football together does not automatically lead to friendship.

In the more verbal social interactions with peers, communicative or behavioural factors were described by the young people as influencing their schooling experiences. This was illustrated by Omar (a boy of Black African origin), who wrote 'nicknames', 'speech' and 'attitudes' on his post-it notes. He explained that funny nicknames made him feel jolly "because I get to say nicknames back to them". What his friends said made him laugh and influenced a lot. Finally, attitudes also played an important role:

Omar: *'attitudes', sometimes people's attitudes just start rubbing off at you and then you start to be a bit like them.*

Clara: *ok, so what kind of attitudes are they?*

Omar: *say that you were violent before and then you have a friend that is normal and a violent person, then that person becomes not so violent anymore.*

The effect that friends can have on each other was a recurring theme in the narratives of the young people. Some like Omar, focused mainly on the positive influences of friends. Others, like Saleem, Ashraf and Rajan (all three boys of Asian origin) acknowledged their potentially ambivalent influence:

Saleem: *Well, friends, generally what they do, you tend to kind of do what they are doing, because...*

Ashraf: *Go with the pack...*

Saleem: *Yeah,*

Rajan: *But they can sort of influence you badly,*

Clara: *Ok, in what ways?*

Saleem: *It can go either way, because...*

Ashraf: *If you pick the right friends...*

Saleem: *If you hang around people who like tell you to be yourself, you are more likely to be yourself, but if you hang around people who do drugs, you are more likely to do drugs yourself.*

Whereas Omar, Ashraf, Saleem, and Rajan described the effect of friends on general behaviour, others talked about the ambivalent effect of friends on specifically school related behaviour. Benjamin, for example, described how sitting with all his friends in class could make him feel more confident and able to do better in class, but it could also put him off. Raveena and Jennifer (two girls of Asian and White British origin respectively) found that other pupils could provide them with ideas and encourage them to think in greater depth about things. They explained however that on the other hand, if you sat next to someone who talked a lot or did not work, you yourself would also end up talking or not working. Finally, Hana, explained how friends were important for her learning because the teachers, in her experience, did not have time:

Hana: *I don't get help in lessons, I ask many times, but I still don't get it.*

Clara: *Ok, so the teachers don't help you?*

Hana: *It's because the boys are all naughty so Miss will have to look after them. They are at the computers and key boards, so she doesn't really have time.*

Clara: *So how do you get help if you need any?*

Hana: *Just doing my best, I'll ask my friends also.*

As previously mentioned, Hana was a recently arrived student with a limited knowledge of English, and the lack of support from teachers that she describes, is therefore particularly critical. My observations at the school showed a tendency to place EAL students like her in lower sets, where there was generally more noise and competition for the teacher's attention. This has important implications both for individual learning, as pointed out by Hana, and for the more general goal of educational opportunity and equality.

Hana's subsequent reliance on friends furthermore points to the importance of peer social capital and similar to the young people quoted on previous pages, her account shows that having friends in class can be conducive to learning. As pointed out however by her peers, friends can also be a distraction. This illustrates both positive and negative aspects of peers in terms of learning outcomes. Besides this traditional way of looking at peers as influencing school performance, several of the young people explained that friends provided important emotional support. Shawn, a boy of mixed heritage, said that:

They [friends] won't laugh at you, sometimes, and they won't like say "get lost, you loser", they will like all the time give you comfort, when people have been telling you bad things.

and Anesu, a boy of Black African origin explained:

Yeah, well, basically, I just think that if you go to school, if you have anything on your mind or anything that you need to get off your chest, you

can just go to a friend and then you will feel more confident, rather than just keeping it in yourself.

As these last two quotations show, the outcome of peer social capital cannot always be measured in terms of performance. In fact, Fawzia's previous comments on how she performed well at her former school but felt very lonely, showed that the two – educational performance and wellbeing – do not always go hand in hand (Bankston and Zhou 2002). This highlights the importance of extending research of peer social capital to include also more 'soft issues' such as socio-emotional wellbeing, and acknowledge that friends are an important source of social capital which can be employed to create both better conditions for learning and more general support and wellbeing. Considering the point made in the literature review that strong ties/bonding networks and weak ties/bridging networks provide different types of social capital outcomes (Lin 2001:27), it is furthermore relevant to explore how young people make friends in a multi-ethnic environment, such as the school in Birmingham, and to what extent their friendships are formed across ethnic groups.

Friendship formation and inter-ethnic relations

As Meadow so clearly described in an earlier quote, it can be difficult to make friends when one joins the school in a later year. Moreover, for young people coming to the school with very little or no prior English knowledge, the issue of language gains significantly in importance. Some of the students found it frightening not to understand what was happening around them, and some of them explained how others had teased them for their lack of English. Hana described how she and two other girls had remained in the basement (the room where the EAL section was formerly based) on their first day of school and had ended up staying together since none of them spoke English. For students who had been at the school from the beginning of Year 7 or whose mother tongue was English, the process

of making friends was quite different. Some of them, like Marlon and Anesu, found friends through a common out-of-class activity – football. Others had made friends by being in the same class, like Raveena and Jennifer:

Raveena: *well, I think it is more to do with your classes, really, it depends on who is in your class and who you hang out with more and what type of people you're with.*

Jennifer: *we didn't as much choose, you just kind of start talking to people and like...*

Raveena: *'Cause they are in your class...*

Others had gone through what might be termed a 'snowball-process' of friend-making, explained here by Katie:

I've always been, or pretty much always been friends with Chloe and then people would build up.

And Fawzia:

I started hanging out with Sofia more often when Emma left, and, then Margaret, but then I started making friends with Lydia and Amy, then I got to know Katie and then I got to know Chloe.

Finally, for Shaneece and Meadow, friendships were built through a combination of things:

Shaneece: *I think it starts with a smile or something, I think it does.*

Meadow: *With me ... it just started happening.*

Shaneece: *I think it is the lessons that do it, because you have to work in groups and then you start talking,*

Besides having different ways of making friends, the young people also had diverging opinions on the importance of difference and similarity within friendships. Shaneece for

example said that most of her friends were from the same Black British ethnic background as herself and when asked if she thought it made a difference she said:

I think it does, kind of, I don't know why. It's like, with someone from a different background, most of the time they think different than you do. Like, say if you are Asian, you automatically think that you have to get married when you are older. Like my friend thinks that, but I don't think that at all. I think you don't have to get married when you're older, get married, have kids, buy a house.

While Shaneece attached some specific values to another ethnic group, and found it easier to be around people whom she considered similar, other informants specifically mentioned difference as a good thing. Raveena, who told me that she was in a very mixed friendship group, explained that “you learn about different things and you pick up different languages”. Similarly, Najiib and Aleem (two boys of Asian origin) mentioned the positive aspects of being in a friendship group, where you could learn from each other's cultures:

Najiib: better to have like [friends that are] different, because then you get to learn about their religion and their culture. Just like, you can be with your own, like separate background, but you can be with them and you can be with mixed people and that's what I do.

And finally, Fawzia and Katie, highlighted the positive aspects of being in a multi-ethnic environment:

Fawzia: It's good here [at the school] because I get to know other people's religions, other people's backgrounds, other people's traditions.

....

Katie: I've learned a lot about Fawzia and her background and stuff, and, 'cause I used to sit next to Leyla [a girl from Black African background] in

RE [Religious Education] and she told me loads of stuff about, moving over here and stuff and that was really, like, quite, yeah. But we also do RE, which I think, up till now it's quite a valuable subject ... Because I've learned how to appreciate other people's religions and cultures and I've learned about different ways...

Fawzia: I never knew anything, I knew a lot about Christianity, and my religion, Islam, but I didn't use to know much about Sikhism, Hinduism, Buddhism, all these other religions, because mostly it used to be about Christianity and Islam, I think. And then here, it is just good to know what Sikhs believe ... it's nice to know what they believe, where they come from and what are their ideas...

These young people's accounts illustrate the way in which inter-ethnic friendships can become a source of learning, which to some extent, supports the positive case made for bridging social capital by Putnam (2001). Their narratives, furthermore, seem to support the 'contact hypothesis' which posits that increased interaction will lead to increased tolerance and understanding (Escandell and Ceobanu 2009; Van Oudenhoven *et al.* 2006:643). To supplement the young peoples' descriptions of positive experiences and to get some sort of impression of whether they were general or exceptional to them, I attempted in the course of my fieldwork, to make some observations on the prevalence of 'ethnic' or 'inter-ethnic groupings'. This was, however, not an easy task, since interactions were rather dynamic. I observed some divisions in terms of ethnicity, but after having participated in many of the Year 11 classes, I began to notice that, in line with the point made by the students above, their interaction often depended on the classes they were in, and these groups did to a certain extent cross ethnic lines. Ethnicity was, however, only one out of several features which distinguished groups as illustrated by Raveena and Jennifer, when asked how groups

at the school were defined:

Raveena: *Uhm, the girls who basically like to talk a lot to the guys,*

Jennifer: *They are all in one group,*

Raveena: *They are all basically in one group. Then the girls who are like ...
us*

Jennifer: *Us, we are like one, and then there are other pupils who don't
really fit into any of these groups. And then you will have...*

Raveena: *The really, really quiet ones who don't talk and stuff.*

Jennifer: *And then, like, you will have all the boys who like listen to rock
music.*

Raveena: *Skates.*

Jennifer: *Yeah, you have all the boys who, like,*

Raveena: *Skate all the time.*

Jennifer: *No, like,*

Raveena: *The Asians.*

Jennifer: *No, like, Chavs³⁵ [seemed uncomfortable using this word], and
boys who listen to hip-hop and like... and then like, all the nerdy kids, it's
quite ... throughout school, but,*

Raveena: *But I suppose in classes when they are not in groups you tend to
talk to them.*

Clara: *Ok,*

Raveena: *When they are in groups you don't tend to mix so much.*

Clara: *Ok, and you said before that your group is really mixed, are the*

³⁵'Chav' is generally a derogative term, which refers to white people from poorer areas or working class backgrounds, with a poor valuing of education. Young people who are referred to as 'skaters' are more likely to belong to higher social classes (Hollingworth and Williams 2009).

other groups the same you think?

Jennifer: *Some of them are, some of them aren't, you might get a couple of them that are, but most of them aren't.*

Raveena: *Ours is probably the only mixed group, we are all really mixed.*

Jennifer: *Yeah,*

Clara: *So the other groups, how are they divided, you think?*

Raveena: *The Asian guys, practically, 'cause you've got all the Asian guys who are practically the same, because they all understand each other's background, and they talk to all the other guys but they like to hang around, because they all get on with the same kind of things, and do the same things.*

Jennifer: *And you have all the like, kind of like, you have a lot of the white boys in one group, but again,*

Raveena: *You get random ones.*

Jennifer: *Yeah, who cross over, people who like won't particularly fit like they won't... they might be Asian, but they might not listen to the same kind of music.*

Clara: *So you think music is like a big ...*

Raveena and Jennifer: *Yeah, music....*

Jennifer: *It's music and ethnicity that really divides the school.*

As this interview extract shows, the girls use a number of different 'tags' to distinguish different groups from each other. Even though they conclude by saying that it is music and ethnicity that divide the school, not all of these categories in fact relate to either music or ethnicity and thereby show the fluid and interchanging boundaries of groupings. In another interview with the two girls Vicky and Melanie, the division between different groups was

also given quite a lot of attention:

Melanie: *Well in our year, like, everybody are split up, it's like, all the Asian boys, like, all the girls stick together, but usually like the different colours, really, all the black boys stick together, it's just like everybody is split up in sections, really. Kind of reminds me of the movie 'Mean Girls' and the way they all sit around boys of their own colour.*

As this interview extract shows, Vicky and Melanie did not make as many distinctions as Jennifer and Raveena and they focused mainly on 'colours' and gender in their descriptions of groupings at the school. Vicky and Melanie were themselves friends from different ethnic background (Black Caribbean and White British respectively) and therefore to some extent contradicted their own perceptions of grouped interaction. Somehow, they did, however, create a common identity based on gender and in opposition to boys. This was illustrated later in their interview:

Vicky: *Someone calls me black something or whatever, it's kinda jokey and I don't really take it serious, because I am not the only one that they call that,*

Melanie: *But yeah, if you was to call them one of their racist remarks,*

Vicky: *They'd jump at you*

Melanie: *They'd jump at you, they'd want .. saying why do you wanna be racist to me?*

Clara: *But when you say 'they', who are you talking about specifically?*

Melanie: *The boys in general.*

The above interview extracts all illustrate the fluid boundaries surrounding the content of groups (gender/ethnicity/class/taste in music etc.) and to some extent show how these divisions are combined by young people to conceptualise oppositions. In spite of these

oppositions, negative experiences of inter-ethnic contact, or direct racism were seldom mentioned by the students, with the exception of Vicky and Melanie's description above. In fact, when I began asking more directly about racism, many of the young people said explicitly that they had not experienced it in school. In the few interviews where personal experiences of racism were discussed, it was furthermore clear that racism meant a number of different things and that the way it was received depended both on the person who said it and on the context in which it was said. Marlon, who was of mixed heritage, for example said that he had not experienced racism in a school context, but agreed with his friend Anesu, who was of black African origin, that it did happen in a 'jokey kind' of way. The two boys agreed that such instances were not to be taken seriously and that all you could do was to "laugh about it and get them back". A similar point was made in the conversation between Omar, Daniel and Jake:

Daniel (white British): *There is actually quite a bit of racism going on between the Asians and the Africans, in that sort of area.*

Clara: *Is that something you have experienced [asking Omar]?*

Omar: *Yeah, if that happens, you just say the same thing back to them. It just turns into,*

Jake (white British): *A fight.*

Omar: *No, they just stop and leave you alone.*

.....

Clara: *Would you like there to be more focus on these issues in school?*

Omar: *No, because sometimes racism isn't... between your friends, they don't mean it, they just want to ... when people are racist to people they don't know, it is just ignorance.*

Clara: *And do you think it is different?*

Omar: *It depends, you see it in their facial expressions, you hear it in their voice.*

Jake: *Can people be laughing at a racist joke?*

Daniel: *Well, if it is with your friends,*

Omar: *Believe me, it can happen.*

Racism is quite clearly a complex concept and in addition it may not only show itself in terms of remarks or verbal exchanges. My data does not make it possible to make any statements about whether indirect or non-verbal acts of racism were taking place. Based on the minimal role that racism played in my informants' narratives, I will however argue, that it did not seem of major importance to the young people. Furthermore, it appeared that the boundaries which divided different groups were based on a number of factors, of which ethnicity or 'race' was only one. In addition to the relatively fluid and contextual nature of these boundaries, the young people alerted me to the importance of not seeing groups and boundaries as something static over time. Several of them, in fact, described a certain change, which had taken place in parallel to their moving up the years in secondary school, as explained by Shaneece:

I think when you first start in the school, the same people from the same background, but as you get older you get wiser and start spreading out more, and then there is less of the groups.

As previously mentioned, most of Shaneece's friends were from the same Black British background as herself, and as she pointed out in the next quote, this could be one of the reasons that she had not felt exposed to racism in school. She did, however, also mention that it could have something to do with gender, supporting Vicky and Melanie's earlier comments:

Shaneece: *I don't remember [experiencing racism at school], but my friend*

reminded me that from year 7, that the Asians never used to like the black people and the white people didn't use to like the Asians and the black people. But I didn't notice that 'cause all my friends were black. I didn't notice. I think it is mainly the boys, though

Clara: *And what about you [directed at Meadow] have you experienced anything?*

Meadow: *I've never... I think I came at a good time, when everyone was growing up, but I have never experienced anything.*

Rather than seeing racism an inherent character of the school or the peers, Meadow here described it as a matter of 'growing up', and 'coming together'. Also Benjamin and Rafee (two boys of White British and Asian background respectively), who were both in Year 10, had seen a similar development:

Clara: *And how do think the relation is between different kinds of people?*

Benjamin: *Yeah, like that's good, yeah. You've got, like, different kinds of groups, like, in year 7 you've got, like, distinct kinds of groups, like, it's us up here, and them.. but now people are like interacting more*

Clara: *What do you think, like different groups and how they interact?*

Rafee: *Well, just like Benjamin said, like, there used to be different groups, but along ... if you play with someone at lessons, like, why don't you do it at the end of the school or in lunch or breaks, you are still playing with each other anyway....because sometimes, like, the teachers put you in pairs... and then slowly you take it, like, outside and then everybody becomes friendly with each other.*

Except for Vicky and Melanie, who described the interaction between different groups as divided and oppositional, most of the other informants had seen a change through the years

towards more interaction. This observation is important because it highlights that racism or lack of inter-ethnic interaction does not necessarily have to be stable or constant and that being together in school can make a difference. To illustrate this, many of the young people explained that they had not been used to interacting with people from other ethnic backgrounds prior to secondary school, because their previous schools had been ethnically homogenous:

Jennifer: *And also my primary school was a Christian school. And there were only ever three Asian people, everyone else was white. So when I came here it was kind of a shock that it was so mixed.*

Rajan: *And as I said, like, the primary school that I came from was predominantly Asian and here you are sort of encouraged much more to talk to white kids and black kids and people who you weren't really sort of...*

Saleem: *You wouldn't meet them....*

Rajan: *yeah, you wouldn't meet them and you wouldn't get to know them.....*

Saleem: *That's how the barriers are broken and it's made a lot more easier.....*

....

Ashraf: *Because it is, like, completely new, and it is something that you have never experienced before and when you come from a school that is, like, predominantly Asian, then you go into a secondary school which is full of black kids and white kids, and it is all mixed, it's kind of, it isn't exactly easy to adjust to at first but then once you get used to it....*

As this illustrates, inter-ethnic contact is something that may take a bit of getting used to, especially if it has not been the norm in primary school. Supporting the contact hypothesis, several of the young people, however, described a change towards more inter-ethnic interaction as they were introduced to more diversity and became more acquainted with people from other ethnic groups. Nevertheless, the way that some of them still described quite divided groupings illustrates that contact in itself is not enough, and that the school and its teachers may have an important role in facilitating the process.

Theme 2: The character of the school

Several of the young people in Birmingham brought up issues related to the school and its personnel in their discussion of influences affecting their experiences of schooling. As previously mentioned, the diversity of the school population was described by many of them as something positive, because it gave them the opportunity to learn from and about each other. For two of the boys, Marlon and Anesu, the multicultural character of the school was furthermore described as something reassuring:

Marlon: *If I was the only mixed heritage person at the school and everyone else was one colour, I wouldn't feel as comfortable as I would, because I would feel like I was missing out in some way, or, I'd stand out too much. And I might even have got picked on. But because it is multicultural and there are all kinds of groups, it is easier to just fit in. Like if it was all, like, one colour, and I was the same colour, I wouldn't know so much about different people and I can learn from them as well.*

....

Anesu: *Yeah, 'cause if I was the only person, I was the only person from my primary school, but if I was the only black person and everyone else*

was the same colour, you just don't feel like you are part of the school. You feel like you don't fit in, even if people don't see that, you can see thatso, this school being multicultural has helped me a lot.

When the students talked about the diversity of the school they all focused on the diversity of pupils. None of them mentioned that the teaching staff were also diverse, despite the fact that such an environment can have a noticeable effect minority ethnic students (Demie 2005:498-9). The multicultural feeling of the school itself was also seldom mentioned, even though both the formal discourse of the school and the activities taking place included a great deal of attention to diversity. In several of the classes in which I participated, the teaching material included themes relating to the backgrounds of minority ethnic groups. In one English language and literature class, for example, a poem was discussed which brought up issues of identity and of being both British and Pakistani. In another English language and literature class a poem about slavery was analysed, which led to a discussion of issues of black identity and Jamaica. In drama, the class read 'East is East'³⁶ and went to see a play called "Romeo in the City". This was a modern, inner city Birmingham interpretation of Romeo and Juliet, where Romeo was a Somali refugee and Juliet a woman of Pakistani origin. Besides this attention to minority ethnic themes, another thing that pointed to diversity awareness in the curriculum was the possibility of taking Islamic studies and Urdu as elective GCSE subjects. These classes were open to all pupils, but, at the time of the fieldwork, only chosen by students from Asian backgrounds.

In addition to the curricular aspects of the school, there was some practical attention to diversity. During the period of Ramadan, it was acknowledged that a lot of the Muslim students were fasting and that they were therefore more tired than usual. Several of the

³⁶ A play written by Ayub Khan-Din in 1997, describing the lives of a British-Pakistani family. The play was made into a motion film in 1999.

teachers themselves were also fasting, and a specific room was reserved for praying in this period. Another practicality relating to the day to day inclusion of Muslim students was that the cafeteria served halal food. Finally, the hijab and salwar kameez were, as mentioned, allowed as an integrated part of the school uniform.

Several special events at the school also illustrated its diverse composition. In October, the school celebrated Black History month with a large party, where parents and relatives were invited to come and eat rice with beans, plantains, curry, mango salad and chicken. Both students and teachers performed music, songs, plays and dances related to Black History and there was a speech about how people, such as Martin Luther King, Malcolm X, Rosa Parks and Ghandi had fought to improve the conditions of non-white people. Just before the Christmas holiday, which fell at the same time as Eid ul-Adha³⁷, the head of the school conveyed an assembly in which the stories of Christmas and Eid were joined together, and the students asked to reflect on their connections.

Talking to the students there were however quite different perceptions of what was actually celebrated at the school and why. Black History Month was, for example brought up in the interview with Shaneece and Meadow. Both girls were black, but whereas Shaneece was Black British, born in Britain and thus part of an established minority ethnic group, Meadow was from Africa and had only become part of a minority ethnic group by migrating to Britain. This may to some extent explain their different understanding of the concept of Black History.

Shaneece: ... *'cause this country is like white people basically, and because we are from a different background we forget about our roots, if you get what I am saying, and then with Black History Month we then begin to*

³⁷ Eid ul-Adha is the second of the two Eids celebrated by Muslims. It is the second most important festival in the Muslim calendar, and it remembers the prophet Ibrahim's willingness to sacrifice his son when God ordered him to (http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/religion/islam/eid_haj.shtml).

remember and so everyone else, what black people do, what black have done, how we have changed the world, or not like the world, society.

Clara: *ok, and what about you?*

Meadow: *I never really understood the concept of it, that's the truth, I never really understood the concept of it. But I think it is important what she said (laughing).*

In another talk about celebrations, Raveena and Jennifer argued that the main celebrations marked at the school were Christmas and Easter, even though they did have a few days off for Eid the previous year. When asked if they thought there should be more celebration of different holidays, they were not completely sure what to answer:

Raveena: *I would like more, but in a way I wouldn't.*

Jennifer: *Yeah.*

Raveena: *it's more because you just want days off school. But some days you want to be in school because of all your mates. You want to learn.*

Clara: *And what do you think?*

Jennifer: *Like, they should do, but it's like, not many other schools do that. It makes schools stand out. Because it is just the norm, to only openly celebrate Christmas and Easter. It would be better if they would celebrate Eid and Diwali and stuff like that.*

Also Vicky and Melanie agreed that not all holidays were equally celebrated, but their memory of which ones were actually celebrated was very different:

Melanie: [at a winter-party at school] *We all get to do solos but then we also do some group songs, and there are going to be other performances like dancing and everything. So it's gonna be like another Black History Month, but based on a different theme, like Christm... not like a Christmas*

theme, because not everyone celebrates Christmas when we do, like most of the Muslims celebrate, they've already celebrated their Christmas, haven't they, so we are not allowed to do Christmas, but we will do a smaller theme. But we are gonna do some Christmas things hopefully...

Vicky: I don't think that's fair.

Melanie: No, because they get to celebrate theirs, they got to have days off when we have to be in school.

Vicky: Even though Christmas is for everybody, we should have, I think that they, when they celebrate Eid, we should get a day off.

Melanie: And they should go to school when we have Christmas, because we have to go to school when they have Christmas.

Vicky: I don't really think that's fair, because even though it is equal, it's not exactly equal, because it .. because of religions, like when it is Saint Patrick's day no one gives a damn...

Clara: So which days do you actually celebrate here?

Vicky: We just celebrate Eid, really,

Melanie: Diwali,

Vicky: That's when everybody is not, something that's basically good for another culture. And though we do Black History Month all the time, but sometimes it is still don't seem like it's fair...

Clara: So how would you like it to be?

Vicky: I don't know, I think they should put more notice in when it is like Easter, or St. Patrick's day. No one cared when it was, like, when the twin towers thing happened. We didn't have a minute's silence.

This conversation is clearly focused on fairness, or more correctly what is perceived as a

lack of it. In the account, religious holidays, like Christmas, Eid, Diwali, Easter and St. Patrick's, are mixed with more cultural ones, such as Black History Month and a 9/11 remembrance day to create a very clear distinction between 'us' and 'them'. Given that these two girls were from a different ethnic background (Black British and White British), this may be their way of maintaining an 'us' which includes them both. But contrary to Marlon and Anesu who, as mentioned above, described the multicultural character of the school as creating inclusion, Vicky and Melanie, have a completely different angle, which focuses very much on boundaries. As has been seen on several occasions, Melanie and Vicky displayed a rather negative approach towards a number of things throughout their interview. However, their account illustrates the many ways in which 'cultural' initiatives can be perceived by students, and highlights that contact in itself does not necessarily lead to increased tolerance, a point which I will discuss further in relation to the Spanish data.

Theme 3: Teachers.

A number of students mentioned teachers as a factor which influenced their experiences of school. This was however fairly rare and compared to how much the students talked about their friends and their social interaction with peers, relatively little attention was given to teachers. The young people's views on teachers and teaching staff varied and, as could be suspected, depended on the specific teacher and their specific relationship with him or her. A few of them complained that a specific teacher "had it in for them" (Jake), or treated them unfairly, as expressed by Najiib: "in the beginning I used to mess around, but then I changed and they still don't believe me. I've changed but they still treat me the same." In other interviews, teachers were however presented in a more positive light. Shaneece for example explained that teachers and head teachers influence you because:

"they want us to get the best grades possible, and they are actually the ones

teaching us to get the grades that we need to get. And the head teachers are the ones influencing us, 'cause lately we have been getting really good grades GCSEs, so they want to push us even harder to get better grades than last year".

Rajan explained that teachers influenced him because "they are the motivators of your education, the people who motivate you". Shawn said that "some teachers will help if you don't understand your homework and stuff.... they will help you with your work." And finally, Najiib added the concept of 'good teachers' to his list of things or people who influenced him in school, "some of them [the teachers], they'll just help you whenever you need something.....good teachers help you every time." Later, when asked if there was anything that he and his friend Aleem would like to change about their school, they answered:

Aleem: Teachers, we would get better teachers.

Clara: How would you like them to be better?

Najiib: Help you every time.

Aleem: Help you more, and not shout at you for every reason.

The distinction made by Najiib and Aleem between good and bad teachers presented itself in a number of interviews. Bad teachers were presented as those who made "everything boring" (Shawn) or who were "too strict" (Benjamin). As explained by Benjamin and Rafee good teachers, on the other hand, allowed students a bit of flexibility and room to talk:

Benjamin: A good teacher is, can be, like, strict but not, like, so much so that you have to be silent the whole lesson, just carry on working.

Clara: What do you think defines a good teacher?

Rafee: Well, a good teacher is basically, like, well you've got a when you

got a bit of a break, just like, when you stop, the person next to you can help you a bit, we are allowed to talk a little bit but, like, if someone shouts at you so the teacher can say could you be quiet a bit so that, like, we can talk quietly instead. Because some people get, like, stuck and the person next to you know what to do. But the teachers, like, basically deal with other students, so they get stuck in one bit.

These descriptions of teachers mostly focused on the help that they gave students and their classroom style. Some of the students though, also presented a more ‘care-oriented’ perception of teachers. Fawzia described a specific teacher as good because “he takes care of all his pupils.” Jamila explained that she liked the school “because the teachers they are really nice and kind to you, in the other school you can’t talk to them, they’d be like, they are not nice. They’d be like shouting at you all the time.” Similarly, Melanie and Vicky singled out one member of the teaching staff who was particularly helpful:

Vicky: She is quite good, because I think she is the only person who can relate to us.

Melanie: She’s got kids of her own who have been through the same things. She’s like the pupils’ voice to the head teacher

Vicky: She has had similar sorts of experiences.... so she can relate to you more than any other teacher.

Melanie: And she respects our choices and how we feel and she’s like, ‘I know how you feel, because I’ve been there before,’ and you find it easier to talk to her, because it is just like speaking to another pupil. And you can really let your anger out and not feel bad that you are shouting at her, because she’ll say, ‘shout it out at me’ and you’ll be like, ‘uuurhh,’ and she’s like, ‘it’s alright, carry on’ ... To me, she’s like my school mum, like,

looks after me, she speaks to you like she's your mum.

As these quotations show, the students put a lot of weight on teachers' social skills and their ability to relate to them. This illustrates that support can be many things and may not always be directly related to learning. The last quote furthermore uses family terms to describe a specific person within the school. This was unique to the interview, but still hints to the role of family and their influence on schooling.

Theme 4: Family

After friends, family was the second most important thing that the young people talked about in the interviews. Most of their remarks about family were in relation to the future, and I will therefore discuss it in greater detail in the next chapter. However, family also played a role in the schooling experiences of the young people. First of all, several of them mentioned that they had come to the school because of a family member, who had been or still was at the school. This is an important observation in relation to the previously discussed British 'schooling market', since it adds a motivational factor to the choice of school. Secondly, family was seen, by some of the students as an important source of socio-emotional support and confidence building:

Shawn: Well, my family are like trying to give me confidence for the next day. Because sometimes I've had like a bad day and my mum says, 'rest your past, tomorrow is a mystery. Yesterday is your past, tomorrow is your future'...

Jake: today is a gift 'cause that's why they call it 'the present'.

Finally, family was brought up more directly in relation to schooling experiences in the form of encouragement or transfer of knowledge. This relates well to the points made by Bourdieu about the transfer of cultural capital within families (1973; 1986). Whereas

Bourdieu mainly focuses on parents, the narratives of the students in my project, however, show that other actors within the family, particularly siblings, may be equally important. In addition, the way in which the young people described the influence of their families on schooling illustrates that support could take different forms. Jennifer, for example, explained how her brother would transfer his knowledge on to her and how she, herself would transfer her knowledge on to her younger siblings.

Well, like my older brother will go out and tell me a random fact about something or tell me the longest word in the dictionary, or something like that, and I, like, kind of learn from them because they are older, and like, my little brother or sister, because they say that you kind of learn more because you teach something. So I will, like, teach them something and then I learn as well.

Rajan explained how his family would invest more directly in his education.

They would say to me, if there is anything you need then we will buy it for your study. I would say it is just the way that I have been brought up.

And finally, a lot of the students described the encouragement they would get from family members, and the value these put on education, as exemplified in these two last quotes.

Raveena: *My mum encourages me to do stuff and obviously, make sure that I will always do my homework.*

....

Najiib: *My parents say, you concentrate on your work, and you've got all of your life time left to do other things, but you just concentrate on your work.*

Clara: *and your parents?*

Aleem: *Education.*

Najiib: *Education is good for you, you need education in these days, you can't get work without it.*

To get an impression of whether the support experienced by the young people was related to their parents' human and cultural capital, I asked about both their occupation and educational level. The occupational position of the parents varied widely. There was a librarian, a social worker, a bus driver, a nurse, a university student, several business owners, and in the case of the mothers, a number who were not working (either because they were unemployed or housewives). Many of the students were not aware of the educational level of their parents, but among those who were, they also ranged widely from university level to almost no education at all. Having to rely on this rather vague information does not allow me to make any substantial arguments about social inheritance or reproduction of human and cultural capital. The view that some of the young people had on education, however, showed that there is not always a link between parental educational or occupational level and children's motivation in school. This was most clearly illustrated by Marlon, whose mum had left school before finishing her GCSEs, and who found education:

Really important, 'cause, like, my mum and dad didn't have that much of a good education, so I want to try and do what they didn't. They want me to do well in school, because they never had and I want to try and make them proud and see what they could have done.

Much literature on education, not only in relation to different minority ethnic groups, but also to social classes has criticised the meritocratic view of education, and argued that it puts the blame for educational failure on individuals, when in reality they themselves are victims of structural limitations (e.g. Bourdieu 1973: 83-84; Tomlinson 2008:176). On a more positive note, research has, however, also shown that it can make an important

difference to school success if young people believe in the importance of education (Francis and Archer 2005:104; MacLeod 1987; Ogbu 1990). This part of the chapter will therefore end with a few quotes, which illustrate that, regardless of ethnic groupings, most of the young people in my study did believe that education was a way to a better future, and linked doing well in school with higher opportunities in the future:

Najiib: *Basically, I just want to do good for myself in the future, so school that's the way you can get your qualifications, so that's what influences me to do good in school.*

Clara: *So what do you think are the most important things about going to school?*

Rajan: *An education, cause there is something that I am grateful about is that I get a free education and that I do get an education, because people would die for an education, they are just abusing the system.*

Clara: *And what can an education do?*

Saleem: *Change your life.*

Ashraf: *It makes your life.*

Rajan: *It can get you a job which is everything.*

Saleem: *It can get you a life.*

Asraf: *It is your life.*

Leyla: *It is true, it [education] will help you in the future. I hate school, hate to wear the same clothes every day – but I need it for the future.*

Anesu: *It [education] brings hope to everyone else, and myself, 'cause I*

just want to do well, for myself and just help everyone around me as well.

So I think education just means hope for the future.

4.1.2. Summary of schooling experiences in Birmingham

The above analysis has identified a number of important issues affecting the schooling experiences of young people in Birmingham. First of all, it has shown that friends and social interactions were a crucial part of how the young people felt at school, and that lack of friends could lead to isolation and loneliness. This was general to all the students, but for migrant students, friendships took on another dimension, mainly because of their language abilities and recent arrival. Secondly, the analysis has shown that having a multi-ethnic school can help facilitate positive interactions between ethnic groups. For some of the minority ethnic students, the multicultural character of the school was furthermore beneficial for their confidence and feelings of 'fitting in'. Thirdly, the students' discussion of teachers highlighted that being a good teacher, in their opinion, had a lot to do with the help and care provided. Finally, the analysis has pointed to the important role of family encouragement and support in shaping how young people feel about school.

As the next part of the chapter will show, many of the points brought up by the young people in Birmingham were shared by their peers in Madrid. There were, however, also a number of significant differences, and this highlights the importance of contextualising and comparing the experiences of migrants and minority ethnic groups in different localities.

4. 2. The young people's schooling experiences in Madrid

Similar to the young people in England, the students in Spain came up with a variety of answers when asked what a normal day in school is like. Some of them talked about a

normal day in school in terms of how quickly it passed, as for example Nadia (a girl from Ukraine), who said that:

I get up, I don't want to go to school [laughing]... I want to sleep, I am always tired, I don't want to go to school. Well, but I have to go. I get up and I go to school. The first hour is always boring, I can't sit. I want to sleep. But then, the other classes pass more quickly.ⁱ

Similarly to Nadia, Ana (a girl from the Dominican Republic) described the school as boring, but Alejandro (a boy from Colombia), whom she was interviewed with, added that the extent, to which a normal day in school was boring varied:

... the most tiring days are Wednesdays, because it has the toughest classes and depending on the teachers, sometimes they give you a lot of work and you get stressed, depending on the teacher.ⁱⁱ

Mario (a boy from Ecuador) included both boring and fun aspects in his description of a normal day in school:

a normal day - sometimes it is boring, but sometimes it is fun. Because, as it is, with the material that we don't like, at times we are bored But with the material, like... when we participate and that, then we enjoy ourselves a bit.ⁱⁱⁱ

The subjects and the way individual teachers taught the classes, thus, played an important role in the way these young people experienced the different school days. Sometimes the teachers themselves were also mentioned, as for example by Diogo (a boy from Brazil), who was in the bridging class:

Monday I don't like because we have maths the whole day. I like the teacher Anabel [the teacher in the bridging class], I like the classes with her.^{iv}

And Rafiq (a boy from Morocco), who was also in the bridging class:

Clara: *how is a normal day?*

Rafiq: *A good day, I like it, I like the teachers and the mates³⁸ in my class.*

The teachers say good things to learn and they don't insult.^v

As these quotes illustrate, the young people in Madrid focused quite a lot on the official school (the classes and the learning). Similarly to the young people in Birmingham, some of them did, however, also talk about the informal school – friends and interaction, as illustrated by Alvaro (from the Dominican Republic), Neculai and Iulian (both from Romania), all three of whom were in the bridging class:

Clara: *Can you tell me a bit about how a normal day here at school is?*

Álvaro: *good, I have friends here*^{vi}

Neculai: *I like the school a lot, the kids, I have many friends, the teachers are better than in Romania. The teachers explain better, we get it.*^{vii}

Iulian: *A normal day... it's like, for me...it's not like I don't like it, but it's not like in Romania where the kids were more together. Everyone talked with each other. Not like here, like five there, two there, each one with his... And also the girls, I don't find them like in Romania. They are not with the boys. There were a lot of girls [in Romania], and you didn't have to be boyfriends and girlfriends to be together. I had a lot of friends [girls] and all, and we walked home together and that didn't mean that we were girlfriends and boyfriends. And at break time we were joking and*

³⁸ The term 'mate' is throughout the whole document translated from the word 'compañero'. The distinction between 'mate/compañero' and the related category 'friend/amigo' is an important one and will be discussed in further detail later in the chapter.

playing.^{viii}

When talking to the students, who were migrants, the comparison of different aspects of the school or their life in Madrid and their previous experiences in their country of origin was quite common. This was perhaps not surprising, since many of the students had arrived less than a year earlier, and therefore still had very recent memories of the country they had come from. For those who had come from non-Spanish speaking countries, language was also an important part of their narratives, as seen in this quote from Alina (a girl from Romania):

A normal day, I come at 8.30, I go into the class, depending on the one I have, normally it is maths or language. And I talk to my mates, and for example Rafiq, I am always saying something in his languages, Moroccan and Arabic, which I like, and to Neculai I am talking in Romanian, and with the others I am sometimes talking in English, others in... and others I am only talking in Spanish...^{ix}

As this brief outline shows, the young people in the school in Madrid focused on a number of things when describing a normal day in school. Compared to the young people in Birmingham, the students in Madrid talked relatively more about the teachers in the school and the different ways in which the classes were taught. Similar to the pupils in Birmingham, they emphasised social interaction with other students. Due to the larger number of recently arrived migrant students in Spain, friendships were often related to other issues such as language and country comparisons. This shows how the process of making friends and seeing friendship is affected by a number of different influences, including the linguistic and migratory background of students. In the following pages, these

factors are described more thoroughly and related to the different experiences of Spanish³⁹ students, Spanish-speaking migrant students and non-Spanish speaking migrant students.

4.2.1. Influences on schooling experiences in Madrid

In Madrid, the young people's discussions about factors influencing their schooling experiences centred around four main themes: friendship and social interaction, teachers, experiences of previous schools, and family. Similar to Birmingham, the theme that the young people spent the most time talking about was friends and social interaction. This section thus begins with an analysis of the various aspects of friendships and social interaction, and their effect on schooling.

Theme 1: Friends and social Interaction

In all the post-it exercises carried out in Madrid, 'friends' (*amigos*) or 'mates' (*compañeros*) were brought up by the young people, and in the interviews carried out without post-it exercises, different kinds of social interaction were similarly given great importance. Natalia and Sofia (both Spanish) both wrote 'mates' on their first post-it note and when asked how mates influenced how they felt at school, they explained:

Natalia: *Well, for example, you get up in the morning and say 'damn...go to school', but since you have classes with your mates, well, it passes quicker. You have more fun. It is not like you are talking to them in class, but...*

Sofia: *... they always help you, we help each other, if something happens: 'I know this', 'well, I don't', then we help each other.*

Natalia: *There is always a good atmosphere between us.*^x

³⁹ The term 'Spanish' is here used to describe young people who have grown up in Spain with Spanish parents. This use of the word, thus, doesn't reflect the legal status of the students as official statistics usually do.

In Natalia and Sofia's account, mates thus play a dual role. Similar to some of the students in Birmingham, they described how friends could be an incentive to come to school and make the day pass quicker. On the other hand, mates were an important help, if the girls didn't understand something or were too shy to ask the teachers. The potential help of mates was also described by Alejandro and Nadia when discussing their post-it notes on 'students' and 'mates'.

Alejandro: *Students, well, they help you a lot, depending, when a teacher that you don't understand a lot from, sometimes the other students understand and they help you a lot. Sometimes also in the break time, they help you and that influences a lot.*^{xi}

Nadia: *My mates.. in the class I have three classmates that I can ask how to do something. That I don't understand this, that I don't understand that. With others I don't talk because they don't talk to me and I don't say anything, and so... But there are some, four, three, who always help me.*^{xii}

Finally, Celia (a Spanish girl) mentioned getting help from her friends, but at the same time added that they could also influence her for the bad.

Celia: [Friends influence] *for the good, and for the bad also – distracting.*

Clara: *And your friends, do they help or distract?*

Celia (with a smile): *at the moment they distract me, but they also help me study, for example things that I don't understand, I take all the readings to a friend's house to study the whole afternoon.*^{xiii}

This point was reiterated by Ricardo (a Spanish boy) in another interview.

If you didn't have any friends in the class - well maybe you would be a bit more into it, paying more attention. But if you have more friends, well, you

talk to them, you pay less attention, they influence, not that it is bad...^{xiv}

As these interview quotations show, the young people in Madrid, similar to their peers in Birmingham, acknowledged the double-sided aspects of friends. On the one hand friends were potentially directing attention away from school work, on the other they could provide an important source of help with schoolwork. A possible explanation for this may be that other sources of help for these young people were limited. As I will discuss in greater detail later in this chapter, most parents at the school had a relatively low educational level and many of the migrant parents were working long hours or had language barriers. The human, cultural and social capital of the families was thus limited. The way the young people used their friends, however, emphasises the need to look beyond parents and explore the role of other networks (including peers) in facilitating human, cultural, and social capital, perhaps especially when analysing the situation of young people who are, in one way or the other, disadvantaged.

Another theme which was recurrent in these interviews was the use of the two related but different terms ‘friends’/*amigos* and ‘mates’/*compañeros*. Even though friends and mates were given some of the same functions – making time pass, helping with schoolwork and distracting – the distinction is significant because it illustrates the existence of different levels of social interaction. Mates were generally described as the people who were ‘just around’ whereas friends were those with whom the young people shared a close connection, like Ricardo put it:

Yes, there is a difference, because friends, for example, Javier, me, Manuel and Miguel, we are friends. And with the mates you talk and all, but you don’t have friendship. It is only talking, ‘hi, what’s up’, yes, there is a difference.^{xv}

Also Celia distinguished between the two and described the different degrees of

‘voluntarism’ involved in the interaction with friends and mates:

Well, friends are the people with whom you wish to mix with and mates are the ones that you have to mix with..... My mates are those that sit in the classroom and my friends can be in other classes.^{xvi}

The distinction between friends and mates was not something that I initially was aware of and therefore I did not ask all the students directly about the difference between the two categories. When looking at their accounts of social interaction, and particularly inter-ethnic social interaction, the distinction is, however, of importance. Nadia, for example, described how she had Spanish mates in school but that her friends whom she would see outside of school were all Ukrainian like herself. Also Ricardo mentioned that all his friends were Spanish, even though both he and Manuel (also Spanish) agreed that they got along with everyone.

Ricardo: *Yes, I get along well with anyone. I get along with every nationality*

Manuel: *We are not racists.*

Clara: *And your friends, are they mostly Spanish or foreigners?*

Both: *Yes, the majority.*

Manuel: *But I get along well with foreigners in the street.*

Ricardo: *But the majority [of our friends] are Spanish^{xvii}*

As this shows, social interaction takes place at different levels and young people may be in rather homogenous friendship groups at the same time as getting along well with anyone. Not all the students interviewed in Madrid did, however, have such a positive view on inter-ethnic relations and some furthermore experienced more difficulties than others in engaging in social interaction. This emphasises the important question of how friendship groups are shaped by young people of different backgrounds and what constraints they

meet in the process.

Friendship groups and inter-ethnic interaction

Most of the Spanish students, who were interviewed in the research, said that the majority of their friends were Spanish like themselves. Celia, who had most of her friends in other classes, said that these friends were Spanish, but added later that she also had friends from other countries in her class. When asked more generally about the interaction between different groups at the school, she did, however, describe it as rather bad, and explained that many of the Spanish students in her view were racist, and that many Roma students, particularly in the lower grades, were racist towards the Latin-Americans. Araceli, Javier and Miguel, all three Spanish, described inter-ethnic relations as very grouped: “It is always the foreigners with the foreigners and those from here with those from here.”^{xviii} Finally, Natalia and Sofia, also described interethnic relations as rather grouped, but did not find this particularly negative or unnatural.

Clara: *And how do you see the interaction between everyone, because they [the students at the school] are from many different places?*

Natalia: *The foreigners and us? Good, I think it is pretty good.*

Sofia: *I think it is good.*

Natalia: *Yes, here it is not like, ‘because you are from another country I don’t talk to you’. For example, there are people who say, ‘well, you are from another country, well, I don’t talk to you, because of things that happen’... but yes, I think that everyone... we are also not all the same, perhaps there are people in Spain and people from other countries that don’t understand each other and they get along awfully.*

Sofia: *But most don’t.*

Natalia: *At least in this building.*

Sofia: *I don't say to them, don't talk to me, or -*

Natalia: *I speak to people from other countries and it's ok.*

Sofia: *You are another mate, and if we talk a bit more, well, maybe we can be more friends, and if not, well, but I don't refuse to speak to them.*

Natalia: *Maybe you don't have the same relation that you may have with other mates, but they also make more groups with people from those countries than with those from ours, with us. But I think it is normal, everyone does that. You have your friends and they have theirs and therefore they prefer to be with their own. But not for...*

Sofia: *Not because of other things*^{xix}

As this shows, the Spanish young people cited above, varied in their descriptions of inter-ethnic interaction. Manuel, Ricardo and Celia described their own interaction with people from other countries as positive. They did, however, at the same time in some way acknowledge that racism took place at the school: Manuel, by specifically pointing out that he himself was not racist, Celia by mentioning that other Spanish people and Romas in her view were rather racist. Natalia and Sofia did not mention racism, but described certain divisions at the group level. In addition, they also focused on the more individual and personal level, where they saw an opportunity of being mates. Finally, Araceli, Javier and Miguel, focused on the group level and saw separated groups as a characteristic and rather negative feature of inter-ethnic relations at the school, preventing interaction.

Ethnic groupings, as described here, were something that to a certain extent was confirmed by my observations at the school, but the way in which they happened was not as clear-cut as presented by the young people above. In the class, where I did most of my observations, there were 24 students, of whom eleven were from Spain, nine from Ecuador,

one from China, one from Ukraine, one from the Dominican Republic and one from Colombia. The Ecuadorian students usually sat together, except for one boy who sat at the same table as a Chinese and a Spanish boy, and a girl who sat next to a Colombian boy and a Spanish girl. A third Ecuadorian boy moved around a bit, but mostly sat with a Spanish boy with whom he was in the *diversificación* class. In the bridging class, where I also did some observations, the 13 students came from seven different countries, and in terms of nationality there was therefore no option of major group formations.

Outside the classroom there was a variety of interaction patterns and, similar to Birmingham, break time interaction was rather difficult to observe. I observed several ethnically mixed groups sitting together in the courtyard and walking home from school, but I also observed that the two largest national groups at the school, Spanish and Ecuadorian students were likely to stay separated. Most often they interacted in separate groups, both inside and outside of the school. Students from smaller ethnic or national groups mixed more frequently with other groups. Not knowing all the students in the other year groups, meant that observations and generalizations, however, have to be made with caution, since it is not always possible to tell a young person's background by their looks. Groups like the Argentineans look very similar to the general Spanish population and, depending on their time of stay in Spain, several other groups are similarly hard to distinguish from Spanish youth. Observations on inter-ethnic interaction therefore very easily come to be about visible differences, even though they do not always reflect the way young people experience and conceptualise groupings.

In terms of gender, I found that the girls most often walked around in small groups, whereas the boys sat or stood together in larger groups. Furthermore, many boys played basketball or football at break time. This activity presented them with an arena for mixing with other national groups and in terms of ethnicity/nationality, boys therefore seemed to

mix to a larger extent than girls, still bearing in mind the above mentioned difficulties in basing observations only on visible differences.

In most of the breaks, the majority of the students from the bridging class sat by themselves in a specific area of the school yard. They were often divided into gender groups, as previously pointed out by Iulian. A few of the boys, however, were never to be found in this area, because they, at every opportunity, would play football or basketball with boys from other classes, illustrating the observation made above. Also, as will be discussed later, a few of the students had managed to create friendships with students from their reference groups, with whom they met at lunch time.

The rather simplified division of students into the dichotomous categories of ‘Spanish’ and ‘foreigners’ used by some of the Spanish young people quoted above, thus does not seem to correspond with the actual picture of student interaction. Furthermore, there are a number of important factors, which differentiate the interaction patterns and possibilities of ‘foreign students’, most significantly language, but there are also some other notable factors, such inter-cultural proximity, understanding, and the way in which they felt received by others.

Friendships and inter-ethnic interaction from the viewpoint of migrant students

Migrant students who had come to Spain already speaking Spanish were directly enrolled in a regular class (except if they had a significant ‘academic gap’). There was no specific introduction period or support, and depending on their background, they could experience some initial academic problems. According to both Jorge and his friend César (two boys from Ecuador), friends had, however, been easily made.

Clara: How were the first weeks?

Jorge: For me, horrible, because I didn’t understand the classes. But the

truth is... that the friends, like I told you, I had hardly arrived and everyone saw me, they met me. I had hardly arrived before I had friends. That is, no discrimination, that is, they see you, and another friend. Yes, no problem, for me it went well.....

César: The same for me, when I came here the first days, the same...I remember that the first class was physical education, and they took me to the class and there was no one there, because they were all in the school yard. And I came and some approached me, asked me my name, where I was from and that's how it all started, and it went well, only the first few days, the first week, then the second week I already had friends. They take you to their house or they are invited to your house, some...with some who are from the country that I am from, I get along very well, always with their parents, the same, they know me sometimes, when they go out they bring me too with them.^{xx}

As the last sentence hints, César and Jorge had the advantage of belonging to one of the well represented migrant groups at the schools. This extended their networks to the parents of their schoolmates. Also Marcial, who came from another of the large migrant groups – the Dominicans – explained that he had several friends, whom he had known even before coming to Spain and that one of them was in fact the reason that he had come to the specific school.

When asked about their friends, César and Jorge both said that they were a mix of Spanish and foreigners, or as Jorge expressed it - *de todos lados* (from all sides/places). Marcial mostly had friends from the Dominican Republic, and the same was the case for Álvaro, though he also mentioned that he had some friends from Peru. Similarly, Ana told me that most of her friends were from the Dominican Republic as she was, while Alejandro

said that his friends were from several countries, but focused on the Latin American ones: “mine [are] from all the countries, Paraguayans, Ecuadorians, Dominicans, all the countries of my neighbourhood.”^{xxi} When discussing the relation between different groups at the school, Ana and Alejandro furthermore elaborated a bit on the different levels of interaction.

Alejandro: *Yes, there is a really good relationship, because here there are many Latinos, also people from Asia...*

Ana: *Africans*

Alejandro: *Africans... we meet all the time...And we like to talk to everyone, there are no problems.*

Clara: *And what do you think?*

Ana: *Me, fine. But I also think that here in Spain you will always get along better with the people that are more... And at break time, it is not like you go, let's say you are from Ecuador, it is not like you go with everyone. It is better with Latinos. And everyone is not mixed up. Every group has its own place.*

Clara: *And why do you think that is?*

Ana: *I think that I, for example, I can't talk to them about things like with another person. Things that I can never tell, things that they will never understand.*

Alejandro: *There are very different concepts.*

Ana: *Of course.*

Alejandro: *You can talk to a person from another country and you talk to a Latin person and they will understand well what you are talking about*

Ana: *But I only want to say, that it is not like you don't get along.*^{xxii}

Ana and Alejandro, thus, express some of the same experiences as the Spanish young people, quoted earlier. In their opinion, everyone gets along pretty well, but the more close relations are still formed with people of their 'own' group. Ana and Alejandro, furthermore, introduces the term 'Latino', which is interesting both because of the large internal differences between Latin Americans, and because it hints to the creation of a certain common Latino identity in light of migration. The two of them came from different Latin American countries and therefore they may have used the more generic term to include them both. Still, the use of the term is instructive, because it distinguishes the Latin Americans from other types of foreigners and thereby breaks the common dichotomy between 'Spanish' and 'Foreigners', which occurred in many of the interviews. Latin Americans are similar to other migrant groups because of their migration history, but their social schooling experiences are significantly different because of their language advantages. This is clearly illustrated when looking at the experiences of social interaction of migrants with no prior knowledge of Spanish.

Friends, mates and social interaction of migrant students, who have come with no prior knowledge of Spanish

Students coming to Spain with no prior knowledge of the Spanish language were, as previously described, placed in a bridging class for up to nine months. After that they were placed in a regular class, depending on their age and school level. Of the eleven recently arrived migrant students from a non-Spanish speaking background, who were interviewed, Nadia was the only one who was no longer in the bridging class. She had come from Ukraine a little over a year earlier, and after having attended classes in the bridging class, she was now in a regular class, but in the *diversificación* group. As mentioned earlier she had a number of mates in her class but when asked whether she saw them outside of school

she answered:

Nadia: *No, when I see them I say “hello, how are you”, but no...*

Clara: *Would you like to?*

Nadia: *No, they have a different way of talking, there are things they do, that I don't like. I don't like to go out anymore. I like it more with Ukrainians, I feel more comfortable.*

Clara: *And what is the biggest difference between Spaniards and Ukrainians?*

Nadia: *The first is the language, I think that when I understand, I think I will like it more, but since I don't understand, you know, like I don't understand things, and they are laughing and I feel like this, and I don't know what they are talking about, what they are laughing about.* ^{xxiii}

Nadia's account illustrates well how the process of making friends or having mates, for someone recently arrived, is influenced by interrelated issues of language, feelings of understanding, and inclusion. The rest of the recently arrived students from non-Spanish speaking backgrounds were still in the bridging class at the time of the interview, and their class mates were therefore all non-Spanish speaking migrants like themselves. They did, however, also attend classes with a reference group for a designated amount of hours per week, and in these classes they met students, who were either Spanish or Spanish speaking migrants. In their spare time, several of these students, like Nadia, socialised mainly with people from the same national background as themselves, but the picture was not uniform. Gloria, a girl from Nigeria, had two friends from her local neighbourhood, who were Spanish born, but of Nigerian parents. Her sister, Phoebe, however, said she had Spanish friends where she lived. Diogo, from Brazil, knew quite a few people from his country, with whom he played football in his spare time. Most of Neculai's friends were Romanians

like himself, but he also knew a few Spanish people. Omar, who didn't know anyone from his country (Guinea) in Spain, and also did not have any Spanish friends, played football in his spare time with people from Latin America, Romania, Brazil and Morocco. Finally Iulian (from Romania) and Mingxia (from China), told me that they didn't actually see many people in their spare time:

Iulian: *Well, I almost don't do anything, because I don't have friends and so I am at home with my hamsters.*^{xxiv}

Mingxia: *Only in the house, because, outside of the house I am only me, one person, I don't have people to be with. I don't want, only in the house.*

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These last two quotations painfully highlight the lack of social networks, experienced by some migrant young people and it emphasises the importance of the school in facilitating peer networks. For the migrants who had come to Spain relatively recently with no prior knowledge of Spanish, limited social interaction was, perhaps not surprisingly, often linked to language. When describing their first day of school many of them, thus, talked about language and problems of communication, as exemplified by the following two quotations:

Nadia: *I didn't say a word, because I didn't know, only 'Hi', 'How are you?' They asked me 'Where are you from?'. Like this I was, quiet. But some time passed and that's it...*^{xxvi}

Omar: *I remember, because I didn't know anything. I was... my mates talked to me and I didn't know how to answer.*^{xxvii}

Even though most of the students at the time of the fieldwork knew more Spanish than on their first day, they still had difficulties when attending classes in their reference group.

This was, as the following quotation shows not only in terms of learning, but also in relation to social inclusion:

Clara: *And how many classes do you have in the bridging class and how many in the other group?*

Mingxia: *Music and Physical Education. Arts no, because I don't want to go there, because in the class there are many students and all of them speak Spanish very well and I don't understand anything. They don't talk to me. And I don't want to go. I only want to be in the bridging class. But there, I go there, they don't talk to me, but with others, with their friends they talk. I alone. I don't talk. But here [in the bridging class] I talk a bit, but in China, I know Chinese and I talk a lot, a lot. I talk a lot in China. My friends call me 'chatterbox'. In China I have many friends.*^{xxviii}

These quotations show that lack of language can be a problem in two ways. On the one hand, it can make it difficult for newly arrived students to make friends because they find it hard to talk to others. On the other, it can be a source of social exclusion or bullying. I did not participate in the regular classes of the students in the bridging class, and therefore I did not experience Mingxia's interaction with her reference group. Through participation in another regular class, I did, however, observe how a migrant boy was laughed at because he did not pronounce a word correctly or understand a question. Language is therefore not only a matter of being able to make contact or participate, but also a matter of how it is received when trying.

The extent to which the students in the bridging class had friends or mates outside of the group varied. When asked whom he talked to in school, Iulian, for example, answered that he talked to most of the group in the bridging class, and in the other building (in his reference group) he talked to four Spanish boys, but not a lot. Neculai said that the majority

of the people he talked to were Spanish, even though he added that he was not completely sure, because there were a lot of foreigners (at the school). And Phoebe mentioned that she had made friends with a Spanish girl, because a teacher had told them to play basketball together in gym class. Another girl, who had managed to make friends with someone outside of the bridging class was Alina. She now called her best friend Yazmin (who had come from Morocco when she was four years old) her sister. Both Alina and Yazmin told me that they had several friends, and while Yazmin said that the majority of hers were Spanish, Alina said that hers were a mix. The two of them would, however, spend most of both their break time and spare time together, and when asked how they became friends, Yazmin explained,

I don't know. She is Romanian, I liked her, she didn't know much Spanish and I met her here in the school. A friend of mine introduced me and, I don't know, but she didn't know much Spanish and slowly by hanging with me she has learned a lot. And I like her very much.^{xxix}

Yazmin and Alina show how language barriers can be overcome and not only mates but also friends can be made across national background and school classes. Language difficulties were, however, not only overcome by friendship but also in the case of Alina minimized, as she improved her Spanish through her friendship with Yazmin. This link between friends and language was also illustrated by Nadia who described the difference between herself and her younger sister:

For me, yes [it is difficult to learn Spanish], because I am older, my little sister knows more than me, because she has more friends and in that way she talks and she talks better than me. For me, yes, it is difficult.^{xxx}

The link between language and social interaction can, thus, be two-directional. On the one hand, language makes it easier to interact socially, on the other; friendships make it easier

to learn the language. Language is, however, not the only factor in inclusion, and social interaction should also be seen in the light of the reception which migrant students are given at the school.

Experiences of exclusion

As we have seen in an earlier part of this chapter, several of the Spanish young people interviewed experienced the social interaction between different groups as rather divided and had a somewhat dichotomous view of ‘Spanish’ and ‘foreigners’. This perception of divided groupings was to a certain extent supported by the students who had a migrant background. Alina, for example, said that she saw the “majority of the foreigners joined together and the majority of the Spanish with the Spanish.” When asked why she thought this happened, she answered:

Because, I don't know, some Spanish, they don't like the foreigners, they say, since you don't know how to talk, and all that, and because of that.. or they say that you are not part of the people. That has happened to me many times, for example in the entrance to my building a lady said to me: 'it's because you come from abroad you don't have rights to anything.' And I asked 'and why?' And she said to me: 'it is because you are not Spanish.' And I: 'I don't want to be Spanish either.' And I swear to you, she came to my door and screamed 'little filthy Romanian.' ^{xxxi}

Using the dichotomous distinction between ‘Spanish’ and ‘Foreigner’ Alina, in this quotation, connects the groupings that she sees in school with the way ‘foreigners’ are received in Spain and powerfully describes personal experiences of racism. She herself, did not mention any specific racist incidents within the school, but others, like her friend Yazmin, did:

Yazmin: *Well, the relation [between students from different countries] is good, I don't see that anyone is criticised, at least not me, well, I think that there probably are racists. Or there must be some around here that are racists...*

Clara: *And in what ways are they racist? What do they do?*

Yazmin: *Well, for example, if there is an Ecuadorian: 'fucking Ecuadorian, filthy Ecuadorian,' they are really after the Ecuadorians, you understand?*^{xxxii}

Similar to Yazmin, also Diogo and Iulian mentioned specific incidents of racism that they had witnessed within the school.

Diogo: *... there are some that don't respect anything. I respect because I want to be respected. But there is someone who, for example, Omar from my class, because he is black they say that he is a thief and I don't know what... I don't see why, just because he is black.*^{xxxiii}

....

Iulian: *It is like, they [the Spanish] play with you and all, but when the time comes that you argue over something, they always insult you 'Rumano.'*
Well, I don't enter into conflicts, but they... and on top of that, those who are from Africa, I don't know how they manage.

Clara: *What happens?*

Iulian: *It's like, always black, Omar, you know who he is, he is from Africa and there are always a lot of boys who say to him, there are boys that think that he was in one of those boats...*

Clara: *On the 'pateras'*⁴⁰, ?

Iulian: *Yes.. or that you are black from Africa*^{xxxiv}

The above quotations show how racist remarks function on several levels. One level is the very general discrimination and stereotypification of foreigners in general, as described by Alina. Another is the direct targeting of specific national groups, such as Ecuadorians or Romanians, as described by Yazmin and Iulian. And finally, there are racist remarks being made on the basis of skin colour as described by Diogo and Iulian in relation to their class mate Omar. The incidents described by the young people are rather serious, and the young people definitely do not interpret them as 'jokes', like some of the young people in Birmingham did, when describing racist remarks. Several of the students in Madrid, however, highlighted that it was only some of the other students, who would behave in a non-respectful way. Also Omar himself, who was mentioned as a victim of racism by two of his classmates, was, in fact, relatively nuanced in his description of the interaction in the school between students from different places:

Clara: *Ok, what do you think about the environment in the school, how is the relation between the students?*

Omar: *Some good, some not, there are no words between us. But others yes, it is good between us. We play football, we get to know each other, and with some we go out. But with others there is no contact between us.*

...

Omar: *The Spanish, I don't have any problems with them. We just play football when we end [school]. But in the street, we don't see each other. Now, I don't have Spanish friends*^{xxxv}.

⁴⁰ Pateras is the term used to describe small boats transporting irregular migrants into Spain. The arrival of pateras and cayocos (the larger boats) is often highly sensationalised by the media and fill a lot in the public imagination of migration (García 2006; Zapata-Barrera 2009:1109).

These quotations from Omar, as well as the earlier one from Iulian illustrate the different levels of social interaction and add an ‘ethnic dimension’ to the previously made distinction between friends and mates. Iulian described how people would play with him, but when there were problems, they would start insulting him. Similarly Omar explained how he would play football with people, but then after school, he would not see them. Football is, as previously described in the chapter on Birmingham, an important social connector, and in Madrid many of the boys would have their main interaction in break time through sports. The challenge is, however, to build on this positive interaction with mates and create a closer network with friends. In this process, not only language, but also racist remarks and insults are clearly a barrier.

The Latin Americans that I interviewed in my study did not bring up any experiences of racism, even though Yazmin and Celia, as mentioned earlier, described racism towards Latin Americans. Luisa and Mario (both from Ecuador) described the inter-group interaction at the school as good, and Luisa added that it was better than in her previous school, where some people had been rather racist. César and Jorge, who were generally very positive in their responses, furthermore said that they got along with everyone.

César: You get along well with everyone, with the majority you get on well.

Jorge: Almost everyone knows you,

César: Almost everyone knows you,

Clara: And how are the relations here at the school?

César: For me, very good,

Jorge: Me with almost everyone,

César: With everyone, almost, very good.

*Clara: Because here at the school there are students from many countries,
how do you see the interaction between them?*

Jorge: *With us it doesn't affect us at all, like, be who you are,*

César: *It's the same,*

Jorge: *The same,*

César: *I get along well with everyone.*^{xxxvi}

From my observations it was clear that César and Jorge did get along well with their classmates, but at break time, if not playing football or basketball, they would most often hang out with the large group of Ecuadorian boys. Whether their positive approach to friends and social interaction in general was due to the fact that they had not experienced any racist or stereotypical remarks at all, whether they chose not to mention them, or whether they had been shielded from them, due to their interaction mainly with Ecuadorians is not possible to say on the basis of my data. César's, Jorge's and the other Spanish speaking migrants' descriptions of social interaction are, however, significantly different from the descriptions of those who have come as migrants to Spain, without prior knowledge of the language. This poses important questions about the role of language in patterns of exclusion and inclusion and in the construction of difference and similarities. These questions are relevant, not only in the relations between students, but also in the relations with their teachers and in the general school practice.

Theme 2: Teachers

In the interviews with both Spanish and migrant students, teachers often featured as an important influence on schooling experiences. When talking about teachers, the students generally explained that there were different types, and that some teachers were better than others. What was considered 'good' and 'bad' and on what basis was, however, quite different. Manuel and Ricardo, for example, focused on the authority of the teacher.

Manuel: *Look, in the second grade of ESO, there was a natural science*

teacher, who came, and in the class he passed us without anything, we didn't study and for the exams we took out of a few books and copied, so they fired him from the school.

Ricardo: *He didn't have authority. And then there are very serious teachers who say: 'I am serious and you have to study in order not to fail.' But then there are teachers who don't lower your grades and you think if they don't lower my grades then I'll do what I want. That's what's happening, different kinds of teachers.*

Clara: *But what are the characteristics that are important to be a teacher?*

Ricardo: *To have authority, and to explain well. If you don't have authority, you are not good for anything.*^{xxxvii}

Similarly, Luisa and Mario, said that a good teacher was someone who explained well and who would get on well with the students. And Ana and Alejandro described how a good teacher's approach could make a difference to whether they liked a class or not.

Alejandro: *Sometimes teachers, let's say, they have patience, and the classes are more fun, more lively, and you like it more. It is much more fun and you will learn.*

Ana: *Estela.*

Alejandro: *Of course, like the teacher Estela, she makes the classes a bit more lively, and sometimes she has personality, but you learn more with her. On the other hand, the maths teacher, she also gives the classes in a fun way, but sometimes it is harder. Depending on the teachers, how they teach the class, if they teach it more lively you like it more and you are encouraged. If they only make you write, you will feel bored and not understand a lot of things.*^{xxxviii}

Whereas these students thus focused on the authority, approach and style, Natalia and Sofia introduced the importance of help and care in their description of teachers.

Sofia: *There are some who, when you have a bit more difficulty or it goes a bit more slow, they come to you and say, 'ok, take your time, and if not, ok.' They try to help you a bit more so that you will succeed. So that all does not depend on you, but also on them.*

Natalia: *'Hombre'⁴¹, they all know how to help you, but some more than others. Maybe you relate better to some teachers than others, and it influences how you feel about the material. If there is a teacher that you don't get on with, well, then the material, you will just think that it is a bad class. Maybe if you get along better with a teacher, well, you get on better and by having a better relation to the teacher, they help you more with things.^{xxxix}*

Finally, also Jorge and César mentioned the importance of help and getting along well with teachers.

Clara: *And what is a good teacher for you?*

César: *That they that respect the students, that they help them, sometimes give advice when you do something bad, all this.*

Jorge: *That more than being a teacher they are like a friend.^{xl}*

As these quotations show there is a close connection between students' experiences of their teachers and the extent to which they feel that they learn. In general the relation between the teachers and the students in Madrid was quite friendly, informal and relaxed. Students addressed teachers by their first name or as *profe* (teacher) and some teachers called their

⁴¹ *Hombre* – literary translation 'man'. Used very often as slang in similar ways as in English or to indicate something obvious.

students by an abbreviation or diminutive of their names, suggesting a certain familiarity. As recognized by the students, there were, however, a number of different teacher-types and correspondingly different teaching-styles. One type was friendly, funny and animated and usually had a good and casual relationship with the students. This type of teacher corresponds well with the one that Alejandro and Ana described as “lively” and “with personality” in the interview extract above. Specifically this teacher was also mentioned by Nadia, but contrary to Alejandro and Ana, who really liked her classes, Nadia used her as an example of a class, in which she found it very difficult to understand what was going on.

Nadia: *There are teachers that are better than others, there are teachers that I like better than others, that explain more so I can understand it. There are teachers that explain like da da da da da da da [said really quickly].... They go very quick, they go very quick and I don't understand a lot of things. I have to look up in a dictionary. I have to ask other people, the teachers or the mates....for example, Estela, who speaks very quickly, very quickly, and I almost don't understand anything, but after the class I ask her and she tells me that this is like this and this is like this. It's ok.*^{xli}

Students, who are not native Spanish speakers, may have different criteria for what constitutes ‘good’ teachers than students, who know the language. As explained by Nadia, one of these was, perhaps not surprisingly, to do with how fast they talked or how well they explained things. This was also mentioned by Alina and Iulian in their descriptions of their teachers in the bridging class:

Alina: *Here, I like for example, the teachers Anabel and Constanza, I like them because they always listen to you and if you don't know, they repeat it, they repeat it until you understand. But in my country, they say, if you don't understand, they don't care. That is what I like here, the teachers.*^{xlii}

Iulian: *It's because the teacher Anabel, she understands you, she knows how to solve problems, and it is like, I don't know, she is almost a psychologist, she knows how to talk to you, she knows how to handle you and explain to you and all that.*^{xliii}

These interview extracts from recently arrived migrants with no prior knowledge of Spanish show that their expectations of teachers in some ways are similar to the expectations of other young people, in that they also focus on the ability and will of teachers to help them. Among recently arrived students with no prior knowledge of Spanish there is however also a more direct emphasis on the teachers' way of talking and explaining and on their general concern. Nadia described how she received help from her teacher to choose further education, Alina mentioned how her teacher 'always listens' and Iulian described his teacher as a problem-solver, "almost a psychologist." Omar furthermore explicitly told me that the teachers were "very concerned about us foreigners."

For many of the young people, teachers and teaching styles, thus played an important role in their experiences of schooling. For those, who had come as migrants with no prior knowledge of Spanish, the role of the teachers in the bridging class, however, took on an additional importance, as the teachers were their main way to learn about the language, the Spanish society and social interaction within it - all skills which were crucial for building up their cultural capital and general societal understanding. When describing the teachers, the recently arrived migrants also often brought in examples from their previous schools in their country of origin. After this had happened a few times, I began asking specifically into the differences and similarities between the school and their previous schools.

Theme 3: Schooling in the country of origin and in Spain

The migrant students had quite different experiences of their previous schools depending on where they came from. The students from Romania and Ukraine all mentioned the different timetables the schools in their country of origin followed, and described the fact that there had been more break time and that they were allowed to leave the school without permission. They also said that the schools in Spain were generally easier, since there was less work and the teachers explained more. Contrary to these experiences of students coming from Eastern Europe, Marcial and Álvaro, who were from the Dominican Republic, had found that the level in their previous schools was easier than in Spain. When asked about the differences between his previous school and this one, Álvaro said that “There, we didn’t study so much” and Marcial explained that “there [at school in the Dominican Republic] are more things, more classrooms, more students. And the level was a bit easier than here.” Similarly, Ana who was also from the Dominican Republic said that she had not learnt much in her school in Santo Domingo, but since she had been in Spain since fifth grade, her experiences were not as recent as Álvaro’s and Marcial’s. Similar to the Dominican students, the remaining Latin American students also found schooling in Spain more difficult than in their country of origin, but that was mainly related to the different teaching styles, the content of the classes and the accent. Alejandro recalled his memories of his school in Colombia and of arriving in a Spanish school:

The studies [in Colombia] were very different. Depending, sometimes they gave a lot of material, much more material, much more advanced. The difference is that there you study with the blackboard, afterwards you take notes, here you study with the books and then, you have to know how to study with the books, and if you don’t, they correct you a lot. Also the

teachers are very different than there. Sometimes when you are having difficulties, they helped you a bit more... In the beginning [after having come to Spain] you feel like in another world, you feel very strange, you don't understand the classes very well. Then a few weeks pass and you have already seen how the classes go. The first day is very confusing, they give you things that you don't even know, you ask and they explain to you, the classes are very strange.^{xliv}

Similar to Alejandro, César and Jorge, who had come to Spain from Ecuadorian schools, had also experienced some initial difficulties when starting school.

Jorge: ...It is much more difficult for us coming from one country to another with the accent and all, in the beginning it is a problem, but then you get used to it and now the teaching is much better here.

...

César: Here, the first time I had social studies, the worst...

Clara: Really?

César: Yes, because I didn't know anything from here. Everyone asked only about things from here, the rivers from here, all the cities. And I only knew Barcelona and Madrid, the largest cities, that was the only thing I knew. I did not know Valencia. When I got here I began to study a bit, almost only about Europe. And when you are there, almost only about America, it is different.^{xlv}

As this illustrates also Spanish-speaking migrants may experience some initial difficulties upon entering school in Spain. The interviews, however, show that the students felt that they got over their difficulties relatively quick. This was very different from a final group of students, Gloria, Phoebe and Omar, who had all come from (poor) African countries.

They described issues, which were different than the rest, and which illustrate that notions of easy and difficult do not always have to do with levels of learning.

Clara: *And before coming to Spain, did you go to a school in Guinea?*

Omar: *Yes, I went to a school there.*

Clara: *And how was it in relation to this school?*

Omar: *Good, we had classes, but some of them didn't have teachers.*

Clara: *And how many students were there?*

Omar: *There were 200.*

Clara: *And how was the level? More difficult or easier?*

Omar: *Different, here more or less, here it is easier than in my country, because here we have enough teachers.*^{xlvi}

Clara: *...Before you came to Spain, how was your school in Nigeria?*

Gloria: *The school was big, there is no, lots of students there, there is not a lot of teachers. Some in my school you have to pay money before you can go to the school and if you don't have money if you want to eat, you can come to school sometimes and you cannot go to school sometimes.*

Clara: *So you couldn't go to school all the time?*

Gloria: *I couldn't go to school all the time, because my mother didn't have money to pay.*

Clara: *In Nigeria did you go to school?*

Phoebe: *Everyday no.*

Clara: *Not everyday?*

Phoebe: *no, because we could not pay money, if we want to go to school,*

we can pay money for one month. The next one, if we don't pay money, we can't go.

Research has shown, that the age of incorporation into the Spanish school system have an effect on how well students do in school. This is linked to the time it takes for students to adjust and adapt to the school system and to the differences between the schools they have come from and the Spanish school they are attending (Pereda *et al.* 2003a:8; Pereda *et al.* 2003b:108-112). The narratives of the students in my study support this very well. The contrasting experiences shown in the data, however, illustrate the diversity of students' experiences and the many different factors that may play a role in the process of incorporation. Some students may experience difficulties due to the different teaching styles and differences in the taught material, others to the irregularity of the educational systems in their country of origin. For some, the education they received in their home country was easier than in Spain, for others it was more difficult, and finally, for a few, hard to compare, because it had been affected by a lack of teachers and poverty. The schooling experiences of the young people prior to migration thus differ significantly and this necessarily has an effect on the competences and capacities they bring with them to school in Spain.

Theme 4: Family

Contrary to the young people in Birmingham, the students in Madrid rarely mentioned their parents and family directly in relation to their feelings of going to school. From the interviews it was however clear that parents and family members influenced schooling in a number of ways, more or less directly. For young people of migrant background, their parents had, first of all, decided to bring them to Spain and they were also the ones who might potentially decide to bring them back, as I will discuss in more detail in the next

chapter. Both processes quite obviously involve a disruption of schooling, perhaps except in the case of Gloria and Phoebe, whose schooling in their country of origin already was seriously disrupted due to their financial situation. Secondly, for some of the migrant students who had siblings at the school, family could also have a social function. Nadia, for example, spent most of her break time with her sister and her account illustrates the point made in the literature review, that siblings can provide bridges to new friendships (Holland *et al.* 2007:103-104),

She [her sister] is in the other [building], but I see her every break. And she has friends, Spanish, that I already know, who are with her at break time. Because the friends, mates, that I have in my class they always go their own way, I don't know where they go, I don't want to go with them, so I go with my sister. And she knows more, for her it is easier.^{xlvi}

Finally, when asked if they had someone who could help them with their schoolwork, the students often mentioned their parents or other family members, albeit not always in an affirmative way. Nadia, for example said that she didn't have anyone, who could help her and that "at home I only have a computer and dictionaries." She explained that she had to rely on her teachers or her sister to help her. Also Alina said that she did not have anyone to help her. She did not have any sisters and brothers and: "my mother leaves at 9 o'clock in the morning and comes back at ten o'clock at night, so who can help me?"^{xlvi} She did however add that she didn't need a lot of help, perhaps because, as previously mentioned, she found schooling in Spain easier than in her country of origin, Romania. Similar to her, Neculai, who also came from Romania, did not find that he needed a lot of help. If he did, he said that his father could help him. In addition, he came twice a week in the afternoon and received extra help with his homework together with other students from the bridging class. Finally, Iulian, who did not attend these afternoon classes, said that he didn't have

anyone to help him, because as he said, he already knew more than his mother.

These narratives illustrate two important issues relating to the possibilities of migrant parents to provide help to their children. One is the constraints that their work puts on them in terms of time. The second is that since several of the parents had only recently learnt Spanish themselves, their possibilities of helping their children with their schooling are limited. If one of the parents had been in Spain longer, he or she knew a bit more, but often the students would have to ask other family members for help, for example aunts or cousins. This could be in relation to homework, understanding the classes, and even accessing the school.

Students who had recently arrived from non-Spanish speaking countries, focused mostly on language when talking about help with school work. This was obviously not an issue for the Spanish students, but they did, similar to some of the migrant students, experience limitations to the help they could get, mainly due to their parents' educational level, as explained by Ricardo and Celia.

Ricardo: *It's that in my house, because my parents haven't studied, they don't know many things, of course, multiplying and so on. When I was younger they helped me but the things we learn now they don't know.*^{xlix}

Clara: *And do you have help, can your family help you?*

Celia: *It's like, no, because I have a higher level than them, so, well, if I have to give in work my mother helps me look for information, things like that, if I have to pass a test she revises with me.*^l

Because the school was located in a working class neighbourhood and since compulsory schooling for those under 16 only was introduced in Spain in 1990, many Spanish parents like Ricardo's and Celia's did not have a very high educational level. Similar to the migrant

students, the young people therefore sometimes had to receive help from other family members, as explained here by Natalia and Sofia,

Sofia: Here in Madrid I have to ask my uncle, because I don't have any other person. But I know that my uncle will help me in all that he can.... He has always said to me 'if you need help, I am here to help you.' Always there.

Natalia: In my case, I ask mostly my sister, because she studies like me, well, not the same, but for example she has a bachillerato in humanities, Hebrew and Latin. Well, in maths my sister doesn't understand anything, but at least if I need help I ask my sister, because my mother doesn't know Latin, you know....^{li}

As these quotations show, family members other than parents can be an important resource of cultural and social capital, both for migrant and non-migrant students, albeit sometimes for different reasons. This emphasises the previously mentioned point of including wider family networks, when analysing young people's access to cultural and social capital. The narratives provided by the students furthermore illustrate the complexity of human and cultural capital when combined with migration. The educational level of the parents of migrant students varied more than the Spanish parents. Some hardly had an education, many had some education and one had a doctorate. In the case of this specific school therefore, it is possible that migrant parents may have possessed more human capital than their native counterparts in many cases. Due to the barriers of language experienced by some of them, their cultural capital was, however, in some ways devalued (Heckmann 2008b:27) or 'delayed', a situation that further stresses the importance of alternative sources of help, such as extended family, school personnel and, as has been argued in this chapter, friends and mates.

4.3. Summary

As this chapter has shown, the young people in Birmingham and Madrid shared many of the same experiences when talking about schooling. Several of the influences, which they saw as affecting their schooling experiences were fairly similar and the functions that they attached to specific people or relations were often alike. All the young people in the study highlighted the importance of social relations in school, particularly with friends and peers, and due to this, their experiences have in this chapter been analysed through the lens of social capital. The young people mostly conceptualised the role of social relations in terms of social support and general well-being and therefore I have furthermore argued that socio-emotional well-being should be considered as a particular resource or outcome of social capital.

Analysing the way in which different groups of students in Birmingham and Madrid described these seemingly common influences, however, reveal some significant differences between the two cities and between students of different backgrounds within the two schools. One clear distinction is between the experiences of young people who themselves are first generation migrants and those who are not. Another, and perhaps even more important difference, is between the experiences of young people who speak the language of instruction and those who do not. As I will discuss in the following chapter, these distinctions also play an important role in the way different groups of young people construct their future.

Chapter 5: Life projects and influences affecting the future

The life projects and future plans of young people are, similar to their schooling experiences, affected by a number of influences, some general, some more group specific, and some depending on the individual young person and his or her particular situation. In this chapter, these different influences will be discussed. The first part of the chapter looks at the young people in Birmingham's ideas of the future and of the influences that they considered important for their future lives. The second discusses how the young people in Madrid perceived their future and explores the different influences that they believed would have an impact.

5.1: Life projects of young people in Birmingham

When asked what they wanted to do in their immediate future (after secondary school) all of the students interviewed in Birmingham were planning to go to college. Even though compulsory schooling ends after secondary school, none of them thus took the option of leaving the educational system. What they wanted to do in college, however, varied significantly and where some of them were very clear about the connection between their choices in college and their future careers, others had not yet made this link. Their reasons for choosing specific topics or future paths were furthermore very different.

Seven of the students wanted to work in the health sector and directly related their choice of subjects in college with their future profession. Shaneece, who expected to become a physiotherapist, aimed to do a BTEC diploma in Health Care and later go to university. Fawzia considered taking science, chemistry and media at college because she wanted to do something with pharmaceuticals. Leyla wanted to be a nurse, for which she also needed to go to college. And finally, Rajan, Saleem, and Ashraf all wanted to become doctors or dentists, and therefore planned to do A-levels in maths and science.

Whereas these six students did not give any specific reasons for wanting to work in the health sector, Omar, who wanted to become a doctor based his choice on a number of personal reasons, including his “greed for money.” Money was also the incentive for several of the other students. Jennifer, who wanted to become a lawyer or a barrister, explained that this was partly because she was attracted to the pay, and Najjib, who wanted to do an apprenticeship in furniture or carpentry said that he wanted to “make loads of money” and have his own business so that people would be working for him and not the other way round. His friend Aleem, similarly wanted to go to college and become a business man. He explained that the specific business didn’t really matter, though, as long as it was something that “you can get money from.”

The idea of having a business was something that several of the students found attractive and this was particularly prevalent among the Asian students. Raveena thus said that she wanted to go to college and later to do business because it ran in her family. Rafee wanted to become an accountant after college, but also mentioned that he had the option of working in a family business either in England or in Bangladesh, the country of origin of his parents. Jamila wanted to do childcare and administration at college, because she would like to have her own business. Finally, also Vanida wanted to go to college and university to learn business, which went well together with her wish to go back to her country to become a restaurant manager.

In addition to these health, income, or business oriented future paths, several of the students expressed a wish to study more vocational or practical topics, some of them combined with more artistic ideas, based on their talents. Melanie wanted to work on her singing (she sang in a school band) but in the immediate future she considered an apprenticeship within childcare or hair and beauty. Her friend Vicky wanted to go to America after college and pursue an acting career. Similarly, Jake wanted to go to college

and maybe try to combine construction and acting. Construction because he believed that he would work with his stepdad as a builder in the future, the latter because he liked acting and had been told that he had talent. Daniel wanted to do acting but also considered doing graphics after college. Amina wanted to go to college and later do media or broadcast. Marlon wanted to become a footballer or a dancer or something to do with the talents he had got. If not, he did, however, prefer to do “something with his hands” such as construction and therefore wanted to do an apprenticeship in college. Similarly to some of the students mentioned above, he was to a certain extent driven by money, because he, in his own words “loved money.” Finally, his friend, Anesu, had a dream of becoming a professional football player, but he admitted that he had not yet thought so much about the future, since he planned to “just do something as it comes.”

Similar to Anesu, a few of the students were more vague or uncertain about their future paths. Meadow, for example, was still, in her own words, in the “confused stage,” and not sure whether to do science and business or science and fashion in college, but it was one of the two. Shawn wanted to study cooking in college, but also wanted to continue to university after college, even though he didn’t know what he specifically wanted to study. Hana was aware that she would have to improve her English, and therefore that was her main objective by going to college. She wanted to go to university, but because she was not sure that she would be able to, due to language reasons, she also mentioned the option of getting a job after college. Ultimately she wanted to go back to her country. Finally, Katie and Benjamin also didn’t know exactly what to do in the future, but they wanted to go to college to study something that they “enjoyed.” This, they believed would give them a higher chance of also working in something that they would like.

As this brief outline of my informants’ future plans and ideas shows, a number of different professional interests and motivations were mentioned. The most popular areas of

work were health and business, and the most common motivations were expectations of pay, talent and interests. In the interviews the more personal level of the students' future lives was less talked about. This could perhaps be due to the fact, that we started out talking about careers and therefore it may have felt more natural for them to mention work related things, when asked where they saw themselves in 5-10 years. A few did, however, mention that they saw themselves married, and perhaps with children. Six of the students furthermore mentioned that they would like to move abroad, four to America and two to their own country, where they had recently emigrated from. This may not be specifically significant numerically, but it is an important trend because all of the students, who talked about moving, were from a migrant or minority ethnic background, and this could therefore indicate something about their experienced position in Britain. When asked why they wanted to go to North America, the explanations were, however, not only to do with Britain, but more with a mixture of 'push-pull' factors. Vicky, who wanted to become an actor, believed that there would be more opportunities for auditions in the US. Raveena liked North America because of "the cleanliness, the people there, just everything, it was so clean and good weather." Finally, Meadow also mentioned the weather in her explanation,

Well, I don't like this weather to begin with, and I want to be in California, 'cause I hear a lot of nice things. There is this program that I watch, and it is all fake, but I just like the fact that everything that I had in Zimbabwe, no, not everything, but like the weather and besides the inflation, so I will probably be happy.

The girls' wishes to move to North America were thus based on a number of things - opportunities, the cleanliness, the people and the weather. Only Raveena had, however, been there, and both Vicky and Meadow was basing their impression of American society on things that they had heard or seen on television.

As previously mentioned, Meadow had arrived two years earlier. She did not express a wish to go back to her home country, but whether she would have preferred that, had circumstances been different, remains unknown. Two other recently arrived girls, Hana and Vanida, explicitly expressed a wish to go back to their country of origin, and it was clear that they missed it. This recent reference to another country is something that distinguishes migrant youth from both minority and majority ethnic youth. As will be discussed in more detail in the Spanish part of this chapter, this may not only shape their ideas about where they will be in the future, but also the educational choices that they make in the present.

5.1.1. Influences on the future lives of young people in Birmingham

When asked who or what they thought would influence their future, the young people in Birmingham discussed a number of different themes; friends, family, role models, personal aspirations and religion. In the interviews, there was furthermore often an implicit debate about the role of individual and structural influences in people's future lives. In what follows, the five themes brought up by the young people are discussed, followed by an analysis of their perception of individual and structural influences.

Theme 1: Friends

As discussed in the previous chapter, friends and social interaction is an important prerequisite for well-being at school. Many of the young people did, however, also talk about friends in relation to the future. This was partly due to the relation between friends and general well-being, as illustrated by the following two quotations,

Katie: *I am not gonna choose things because they [my friends] are doing that. But I think to be happy is quite important and when you are with your friends -*

Katie and Fawzia: - *you are happy.*

Benjamin: *I like being with my friends, so I am pretty sure that I will have my life around them, because my friends mean a lot to what I do.*

To others, friends were a more direct inspiration for future occupation. Daniel, for example, explained how he believed that “someone close to you” and “peer pressure” would influence his future, “say a girl I like, likes acting as well, it’s gonna motivate me to do acting. Same sort of thing with, like, peer pressure and family opinion,” and when his friend Jake asked him where he thought peer pressure came from, he elaborated, “well, if a friend says acting is stupid, you are not gonna do that.” Also Najiib and Aleem gave quite a lot of weight to the inspiration and opinion of friends, as seen in this extract from a follow-up interview with the two boys, where Najiib explained that he wanted to be a businessman and not a footballer, as he had previously said,

Najiib: *I don’t want to be a footballer anyway.*

Clara: *Ok, so what changed?*

Najiib: *I just changed my mind*

Clara: *Ok,*

Aleem: *I am the same as him, I would like to have an apprenticeship*

Clara: *And what gave you this idea?*

Najiib: *I don’t know. I just talked to people who are doing it, I talked to my friends who are doing it and they say that it is very good for you.*

Clara: *Ok, and what about you, what happened to make you want to do this?*

Aleem: *Because people I know who are doing it.*

Clara: *Ok, and what kind of people are they?*

Najiib; *Friends*.

The way Daniel, Najiib and Aleem describe the role of friends and their effect on their future life choices, supports the link made between behaviour and peer influences within the literature (Cotterell 1996), but their narratives focus more on the positive aspects of peer influence than on the negative ones, which usually dominates research (e.g. Borsari and Carey 2001; Cotterell 1996: 129-177; Dembo *et al.* 1994). Besides looking to friends for inspiration, Najiib and Aleem, also believed that their friends and girlfriends would be a source of help, advice and support. Similar to them, Jake mentioned both the support of his girlfriend and his friends in general as something he believed would influence his future.

'Cause my girlfriend, she stands by me whatever I do, so it is nice to have some support.

...

Uh, well there are friends and they can help you out and everything, so let's just say, uhm, they need a house and you need a house, you can like put the money together and get a house and then each pay the rent.

To the young people, the role of friends was thus multifaceted and their accounts illustrate the different levels on which peer social capital can operate. Their focus on friends as a source of well-being and support emphasises the need to include more 'intangible resources' such as 'feeling good' in understandings of social capital and the way it is constructed by young people.

Theme 2: Family

In addition to friends, family constituted a major role in the young people's future lives, as expressed by all the ones I spoke to in Birmingham. Some of them mentioned the influence of parents, brothers and sisters specifically, others just talked about the more generic

concept of 'family'. The degree to which they saw the influence of family furthermore varied. This, of course, depended on their family structure, whom they lived with, and the degree of social norms placed on them by their family. Vanida, for example, lived with her mother and stepfather, and said that her mother would decide her future, "she says when you finish university, you go back Thailand, and then you can be manager. I decide for you, something like that." Fawzia, who lived with both her parents, also explained their influence on her future life choices,

Mine [parents] are like, you'll go to that college, you'll get that job, you'll do that, and I am like, are you sure that I really would like to do that, that, and that?.... Because they just want me to go to like, the best place, like, get the best job, I am gonna be like, if I get a good grades in math, and I am like, I have to get a C in maths and then I am gonna go to my mum and mum if I get a C, can I go to the college that I want, I got that C, so it's a bit like...(laughing)...blackmail.

Finally, Jamila, who lived with both her parents and her grandmother, explained that not only her parents, but also her grandmother had quite a strong say in the matter,

My dad says that I can do a job or anything that I would like, yeah, my dad he.. I don't know about my grandma. She would let me go to college, but I don't know about getting a job.

Jamila thus described her grandmother as a potentially restricting factor, emphasising the influence of extended family in educational and career choices. The three girls furthermore illustrate that strong social ties may not only be empowering but can also function in rather limiting ways (Holland *et al.* 2007; Portes 1998:17-18; Zontini 2010). For most of the young people, parents and family did however play a less restrictive role and many of them explained that their parents would support their decisions, almost whatever they were.

Najiib and Aleem, for example, said that their parents thought that their wishes to become businessmen were “alright” and added “at least you don’t hang on the street, then it’s alright.” And Benjamin explained that his parents were “not too strict or anything and they haven’t said to me, you have to do this when you are older or anything.” Finally, Raveena explained how her father moderately tried to influence her. Contrary to Fawzia’s account in which she described her negotiation with her parents as blackmail and insinuated that her parents had the ‘upper hand’, Raveena, however, saw herself in control of the situation,

Raveena: My dad is like, why don’t you be a doctor. Well, I don’t really want to be a doctor, but my dad is trying to bribe me, like, I’ll buy you a Porsche, and -

Clara: And why do you think he would like you to be a doctor?

Raveena: Well, he’s always wanted one of his kids to be a doctor. And I was like, well it’s not me, you might want to have another child, but it’s not me (laughing).

As can be seen from these examples, the degree to which family directly influences future paths varies and depends on the relationship the young people have with their families. Family influence may, however, be indirect and for those of the students who did not mention that their parents would directly tell them what to do, the role of family and friends was often conceptualised in other ways. The four main ways, in which the young people spoke of their families were, as someone on whom you could count for support and advice and direction, as a source of practical help, as role models (both positive and negative), and as someone whom you had a responsibility towards.

Family as a source of support and advice

Several of the young people described their parents and family as someone older, with more life-experience, and thus with a 'historical perspective' (Rawlins and Holl 1988). Melanie explained that, "my Nan has already lived like most of our life, so she knows what to expect" and Raveena and Jennifer described their parents as capable of giving advice,

Jennifer: *Because they are your parents and they have been through it all, so they can like advice you.*

Raveena: *...Help you along the way.*

The supportive side of parents was also mentioned by Najiib and Aleem, who explained that parents "are gonna be there whenever you need them" and "you'll need them and they'll sort you out." And finally, this 'ability to sort you out' was mentioned by both Vicky and Shawn,

Vicky: *My dad.... Sometimes I don't like the stuff he does, because I can see that in myself, but also because he can give good advice as well and he can lead me in the right direction.*

Shawn: *Well, they [parents] help me try to change, how to live a life, like be truthful, treat your girlfriend well, show her respect.*

To these young people, the supportive role of parents was, thus, understood mostly in terms of emotions or values. While most of them talked about their parents in general, Jake described different types of help and introduced the idea that the type of support offered by fathers and mothers may not always be the same.

Well, my dad, my real dad, he used to like, if I ever need a job, he can help me, and my stepdad, he is like, he can get us a job, but my mum she is like the supporter and everything.

As this shows, Jake looked to his family for both practical and emotional help. His father and his stepfather were the ones he believed would help him practically, while his mother was more of an emotional support. The same pattern applied to the role he gave his girlfriend and his friends in general, and there seemed thus to be a certain gender pattern in his narrative. None of the other young people came with explanations that could support this further, but several of them mentioned, similar to Jake, the practical help that their family provided them with.

Family as practical help

Jake was the only interviewee, who directly counted on a job working with his family. Even though he wanted to be an actor, he saw himself working in construction in 5-10 years time and counted on his stepdad to help him with such a job. Even though Jake was the one who mentioned family most directly in terms of employment opportunities, a number of other students also mentioned the possibility that their close relatives could be a source of future work or in other ways help in practical terms. According to Rafee, his mother, for example, said that he should just get a good job, whereas his father suggested that he could take over the restaurant. Shaneece also mentioned her dad, his girlfriend, and her brother as future influences.

Shaneece: I think my dad is gonna influence my future, 'cause he is trying his best to offer me work experience. 'Cause this school doesn't offer work experience. And because his new girlfriend works in a hospice, so she can get me something health related.

Clara: Ok, is there anyone else or anything else?

Shaneece: My brother kind of, cause he is a football coach, and footballers need physiotherapists. He used to be a footballer.

Clara: *So would you like to be a physiotherapist for sports...*

Shaneece: *For footballers...*

And finally Meadow mentioned how her mother probably would influence her,

She is a nurse, and she keeps sending me all these careers that will give me money so I can take care of her, yeah, so basically, she tells me what I have to do.

As pointed out in these quotes, some young people look directly to their family for practical help in working out their future paths. Shaneece's experiences introduce another theme, which is that some young people also look to their family to see what they have been doing and to some extent mould their wishes after that. This can, as illustrated below, be experienced in both positive and negative ways.

Family members as role models

Role models and family inspiration was a recurring theme in many of the young people's narratives. In her explanation of why she wanted to open a business, Raveena, for example, pointed to the inspiration of her family and said that she wanted to open a business, "‘cause it has run through our family." Even though her father, as mentioned earlier, wanted her to be a doctor, she herself emphasized the way that business had run in her family and mentioned that her sister had also done business studies. In a similar way, Daniel, looked to his brothers for inspiration and valued the opinions given by his family,

Well, I've got four brothers and three of them have already done graphics.

One of them was quite successful at it and he is doing quite well at the moment. One of them tried it, but he didn't get into it. And one of them is doing it at college. And my parents like it, you know, they think it is good.

When asked why she might choose a specific college, Jamila also pointed to family influence, “It’s alright, I don’t know, my cousins go to that college, and they say that I’d like it.” Finally, Vicky, who considered moving to America, said that not only did she believe there would be more opportunities to become an actress in America, but it was also where her father was going to move. Family members can therefore be an important factor in future choices and can, as pointed out by Ashraf and Saleem, even function as role models,

Ashraf: *...you might look at someone in your family who have made it into something and that might inspire you.*

Saleem: *What is it called, uhmm, role models.*

Clara: *role models, yeah.*

Saleem: *You can follow what they did.*

The way that Ashraf and Saleem described the concept of role models was based on having “made it into something,” and as I will discuss later, this presented a recurring theme in their interview. Some of the young people, however, also looked to family members for their more general approach to life, as Melanie pointed out in relation to her mum,

My mum I see every day, so she is just like my role model, how I want to be like her.... it’s the way that she always puts on a happy face, she does things around the house, trying to keep the house happy. It’s the way she tries to make people feel welcome in the house, she is always nice to everyone, she always keeps on smiling. Being happy for the days ahead and things like that...

Whereas these examples point to positive images provided by family members, incentives to do well in education can also relate to more negative images, provided either by the family members themselves or by others in the family. Melanie described how her aunts

and uncles would say: “Oh, I wish I had an education and had gotten on with my lives, instead of having quick kids so early.” and Meadow explained that certain family members were looked upon badly because of what they had done.

Well, my family, it goes way back, when every time my family is always saying, don't end up like her, don't end up like him and all that and that pushed me further away from going on the wrong side, which I know I would have if it hadn't been for them. Pushing me further to the other side.

Clara: *And what do you mean by the wrong side?*

Meadow: *Like, let's say, my aunt got pregnant when she was 14 or 15, and the way we live that's just really bad, that's the worst you can ever do.... And the way they see her, no matter what she does, she can never do it right. And I really do not want to end up like her...”*

As this illustrates, family can thus function as role models both directly and as figures used as ‘anti-role models’. When analysing the influence of family on life projects this is an important point to consider because it shows that the reproduction of values and life styles is not always linear.

In all of the above examples, the influence of family is seen as a result of what the family does for the young people. Some of the young people, however, made a different connection and mentioned that their family influenced their future choices and life projects because of what they, as young people, wanted to do for their families.

Responsibility towards family

Several of the young people expressed quite a lot of affection and care for their parents. Vicky, for example, told me that she believed her whole family would influence her in the future because “they are always there” and her mother in particular “because she makes me

want to be a better person for her, because she has been through a lot and she is still a strong woman and I just love that in her.” Vicky thus expressed a sense of symbolic responsibility, because her mother had been through a lot. Similar to this, Rajan said that he wanted to do good in the future to thank his parents, and, as previously mentioned, Marlon wanted to make his parents proud. They didn’t have an education and he wanted to show them what they could have done. Later in the interview he elaborated further on this point by saying that,

I want to make my mum proud, and I wouldn’t want her to be disappointed in what I’ve become. I wouldn’t want her to be like, ‘Uh, you should have done better’ or like ‘he’s wasted his life’ or something.

Finally, Anesu displayed a more material responsibility towards his family. In relation to schooling, he mentioned that his family made him want to do better in school because,

The way I have been brought up its like encouragement to look after my parents when I am older, so I just want to do good in school and work harder to look after them when I am grown up.

And later in relation to the future he repeated this point,

Like I said before, I want to look after them when I am older, so it is something that motivates me to do better in school, so I can have a better future, and my family....

The young people’s life projects were thus not only based on their own individual aspirations and motivations, but also related to their feelings of social responsibility. This illustrates the complex and multifaceted role that the family plays in relation to education and life choices. It shows that life projects, to a certain extent, are influenced by social ties and networks and it is therefore useful to analyse them through the lens of social capital. In his discussion of social capital, Coleman describes three main ways in which social

relations generate outcomes and resources: through reciprocity, information, and social norms (Coleman 1988:102-105). The narratives of the young people illustrate all three but to a varying extent. There was a certain link to reciprocity in the narratives, in that the young people mentioned the issue of ‘paying back’ their parents. In a few cases, the family was a direct source of information – they had been through things and were capable of giving advice. The young people’s narratives, however, also show that family was a source of emotional support and in line with the argument made earlier in this thesis, this makes the case for an inclusion of more socio-emotional well-being as a recognized outcome of networks. Finally, family provided the young people with social norms, through role modelling, both positive and negative, illustrating that social ties and family members can function in both direct and reverse terms to create capital. Role models were, however, not limited to family members.

Theme 3: Role models and inspiration

When thinking about the influences they thought would affect their future, several of the young people mentioned ‘other people’, ‘older people’ or ‘role models’. These could, as illustrated in the following section, be inspirational for a number of reasons. Katie and Fawzia explained how they looked up to people who “managed to get themselves a good job that they enjoy doing” or who “have got famous for doing good stuff, whether it’s changing political views... generally being wise people.” People who had become famous without doing anything, however, were not seen by the girls as valuable role models. Also Rajan, Saleem and Asraf discussed different types of role models and as the following interview extract shows, they did not completely agree on what it takes to become one.

Clara: *So which kind of people would be your role models in the media*

[referring to a post-it note]?

Saleem: *In the media, uuuh, people who are successful, and done something by themselves, like in the good way, they've kind of done all the hard work.*

Rajan: *Someone who is like a really good role model for me is Sir Alan Sugar, do you know Sir Alan Sugar? Businessman.*

Asraf: *David Beckham.*

Rajan: *No, I hate David Beckham.*

Asraf: *David Beckham, he started from nowhere and look where he has got to.*

Rajan: *Sir Alan started -*

Asraf: *To be a footballer, you have to work day in and day out.*

Rajan: *Yes, kicking about a football and it all comes out of natural talent*

Asraf: *So what?*

Rajan: *Sir Alan started out in a can sort of house and he started off with something like a 100 quid, maybe less than that, and he slowly worked up money, like he would go to markets and sell stuff, and he bought his own car slowly and he slowly started to build up a business, and now he's like worth like 800 mio. pounds, and he is really successful, and he recently sold on his business, and he is like, makes this TV-show called 'The Apprentice', reality TV-show, and he is someone...*

Clara: *So someone who build himself up from nothing?*

Rajan: *Yeah, from nothing to something, from zero to hero.*

Contrary to Katie and Fawzia's description of role models, Rajan and Ashraf display a clear admiration for wealth, but also for the pure fact of social mobility, albeit different in the way it was obtained. Whereas Rajan was the only one, who pointed to a businessman as a

potential role model, Ashraf was not alone in mentioning footballers. Also Anesu, himself aspiring to become a footballer, saw them as influential to his future,

Anesu: *Well some of them [footballers], you see that or you read books and stories, and you just see that they weren't as bright or clever, but still they've managed to make something of themselves and their talent. So it just shows you that anything is possible.*

Similar to Rajan's description of Sir Alan Sugar, the point of becoming something 'against the odds' was a theme in Anesu's description. Reading about other people could, in his view, inspire someone to think that they themselves could become something, even though the odds were not the best. Stories of other people could however also provide an image of something to go against, as discussed by Anesu and Marlon, later in the same interview,

Anesu: *Well stories [referring to a post-it note], I wasn't too sure about that one, well, it's like, you hear stories about people and what they did, regrets, so you know you don't want to be like them. So you just want to make something better of yourself.*

Marlon: *Like, if someone were to ask you what you did in your life, you wouldn't want to tell them something bad.*

Anesu: *No no.*

Marlon: *Like, what did you do, ah, nothing, I had a bad job and was just being poor.*

Anesu: *See them people who write books about themselves, they are like, a bit of this and a bit of that. So I just want to use stories to like motivate me so I can do something better.*

Clara: *but is it then mostly negative stories?*

Anesu: *yeah, 'cause I want to know that it doesn't have to be this way.*

There is like, a better future. I can do better than this.

Anesu and Marlon here make a description similar to Meadows earlier story about her aunt and the ‘anti-role model’ she had become. All three show a desire to avoid these negative accounts. Having negative family or celebrity references does not therefore necessarily lead to having a negative outlook or a reduced expectation of prospects but can as these three young people show be a motivation to ‘do better’. This adds an extra dimension to existing theories of the role of networks, which primarily focus on the positive effects of school or career oriented networks, and on the negative effects of networks, which represent non-school and ‘non-normative’ values (e.g. Urdan 1997; Crosnoe *et al.* 2003).

Theme 4: Religion

Religion was brought up by seven of the students in Birmingham. Five of the seven were Muslim and two of them were Christian. Except for Fawzia, who described an explicit wish to learn more about Islam, religion was mostly described as a guideline, for example as explained by Katie and Anesu, who both self-identified as Christian:

Katie: I think my religion only extends as far as I have my own head on my shoulders, and I know what I am going to do. I know I am not going to do anything stupid.

Anesu: Well, I am a Christian and in the bible it says that what you do to yourself, do to your neighbour, and just do good to everyone else around you. So I just want to be able to get a job, give it to people who are in need, and just follow the bible.

Ashraf, who was a Muslim, explained that, in his view, religion was not entirely decisive of how your life would be, and the way you lived your life did not entirely depend on your

religion either. He did, however, point out that the prophet could be seen as a role model and similar to Katie and Anesu, he thus combined religion with guidance. For both him and Saleem, also Muslim, religion did not play a major role in their everyday life. Even though they would like it to, they both said that “it didn’t really come out.” They did, however, feel that being a Muslim in England had made life more complicated for them. Both because they were “born in between” as Saleem expressed it, but also because they felt that people looked at them differently which was partly because of the negative representation of Muslims in the British news. The way that religion or other identities influence the future plans of minority ethnic youth does not therefore only depend on how they perceive their identity and act on it, but also on how the surrounding world perceives and receives them. This illustrates the importance of considering both individual and structural influences.

Theme 5: Individual versus structural influences

Studies of migrants and minorities in education have pointed to the part that future aspirations and hopes play in young people’s educational success (Ogbu 1978; 1990). Thus, the extent to which young people believe in equal opportunities and their own agency or, in contrast, feel that the wider society is biased against them, is of high importance. The narratives of the young people in Birmingham illustrated a number of ways to approach this dilemma.

The interview which displayed the issue of personal capabilities the strongest, was the one with Rajan, Ashraf and Saleem. Even though Saleem, as mentioned above, found that being Muslim had made his life harder in Britain, all three displayed a real belief in their own abilities. This was clearly illustrated when the group discussed Saleem’s post-it note ‘you as a person’,

Saleem: *Yeah, like the kind of person you are, if you are like, a dedicated, motivated person, and you wanna do good for yourself -*

...

Rajan: *Motivation is the key to success*

Ashraf: *You got to be positive about everything*

Rajan: *Focus on a goal and you need to go for the goal.*

Personal motivation and determination was not explained as explicitly as this in any of the other interviews. In general, Rajan, Ashraf and Saleem were very much focused on ambitions and individual goals, and it is therefore not surprising that they would focus specifically on the influence of personality on future life. In the other interviews this was brought up more indirectly, most often when I asked my final question - if the students believed that everyone had the same opportunities in the English society. This question prompted a number of interesting answers, some relating to the young people's perceptions of inequality. Benjamin, for example, focused on employment and income in his answer,

I don't think everyone have the same opportunity, because lots of people are born into, like, poor families, so they are not going to be able to, like, afford for their kids to be, like, so much happy, and that means that they are not going to be able to do well in school, and they are not gonna be, like, you know, great.

Shawn built his argument around racism and limited resources:

No, 'cause some people are treated different because of their skin colour.

And there are not enough houses for everyone, and not enough schools.

His friend, Jake, however, disagreed, stating that, "everybody is equal. You just have to know where the opportunities are." This point of view was rather common among the

young people, and as the following four quotations show most of them believed that it was up to people themselves to seize their opportunities.

Jennifer: *I think the opportunities are there. It is whether they apply themselves to try and do it.*

Raveena: *Yeah, take them, yeah.*

Najiib: *Every person has got opportunities, if they do good.*

Aleem: *That's the problem, if they mess about -*

Najiib: *They need to put their head down.*

Clara: *In what ways?*

Najiib: *Like put their head down working, not hang around in the streets, get in trouble with the police and get a record, and all that.*

Marlon: *As long as you try hard, and you don't take it easily...*

Anesu: *Well, everyone's got opportunities, some people just don't take them. Some people choose to, there are like loads of influences, so some people choose the wrong ones. Some people go down the right route, and take the opportunities.*

Clara: *Do you think everyone has the same opportunity in the English society?*

Shaneece: *Yeah, I do.*

Meadow: *If you work hard.*

Shaneece: *Yeah, you have to have ambition.*

....

Meadow: *Yeah, it is up to you.*

Shaneece: *How you act.*

Meadow: *There is nothing stopping you.*

If one relates these opinions to the dualism between individual agency and structural limitations, it seems that the young people's views on society placed more emphasis on agency rather than on structure. Some, pragmatically enough, pointed out that other young people could be disadvantaged for various reasons. None of the young people, however, related this disadvantage to themselves and there was a certain consensus that people, to a large extent, were responsible for their own success. Research into the educational conditions of children of immigrants has argued that they may display patterns of behaviour similar to Ogbu's involuntary minorities (minorities who have not chosen to be brought into the country where they live and who may develop oppositional behaviour due to their subordination in society, see Ogbu 1990:46) and consequently develop a belief that education may not necessarily be instrumental for making it in the future (for a description see Gibson 1997b:437). My research shows that this is not always the case and that children and grandchildren of immigrants may have highly instrumental and pro-active attitudes to their future lives, even though they come from rather disadvantaged backgrounds or discriminated communities. It furthermore supports findings by Irwin (2009) that young people in Britain generally do not see racism and other structural barriers as defining their future (p.342). This can perhaps be related to a powerful discourse in Britain regarding competitive individualism (Brooks 2007:704). The young people's belief in their own abilities could, however, also be related to the presence of a certain 'success-discourse' at the specific school in which the fieldwork was carried out.

In the day-to-day life of the school, the teachers conveyed a discourse, which was strongly focused on achievement, targets, success and motivation. The assemblies, which

were held twice a week, often contained a kind of ‘pep-talk’ about the open and almost endless possibilities of students, who were motivated and took responsibility for their own learning. During the first few weeks in the school, one of the things that struck me the most was furthermore the very strong focus on targets. Each student had a target grade, which they were supposed to obtain and it was regularly discussed how it would be done. Besides target grades the students were given an evaluating grade each day to describe their performance and behaviour. The starting point was grade 6. If teachers felt they were being too noisy or naughty etc. they could lower their grade to 4, or maybe 2, or in the worst case scenario, put them on a warning. These numbers were used to make the students behave, but were also sent to form tutors who at the end of the day would give them a ‘well-done’ or ‘could-do-better’ stamp in their planners accordingly.

Because the students were in their last year of compulsory schooling, there was a lot of focus on the importance of their future choices. In both assemblies and classes, the necessity of considering and planning for the following year was highlighted. Finally, an ‘Enrichment Day’ was carried out for Year 11, specifically dedicated to careers and future planning. Together, all these measures may have helped create the agency-focused discourse reflected in many of the interviews and the perception that the students, themselves, were largely responsible for their own future.

5.1.2. Summary

The above analysis of the life projects of the young people in Birmingham shows that their plans and wishes for the future are affected by a number of important influences. The one that the young people talked about the most, was the influence of family, which was seen both as a source of emotional support and practical help and as source of role models. In addition, some of them had a sense of responsibility towards their family, which motivated

them to 'make something of themselves'. Besides family, also friends, role models in the public eye, religion and individual motivation were brought up by the young people as things which influenced their future aspirations. They had a strong belief in their own abilities, which may be related to the discourse of the school. Still, as will be seen in the next part of this chapter, education and individual capabilities also played an important role in the narratives of the young people in Spain, even though such measures and a 'success discourse' was largely absent.

5. 2: Life projects of young people in Madrid

Like their peers in Birmingham, the young people in Madrid had a variety of ideas and wishes regarding their future. All of those, who were about to leave secondary schooling, wanted to continue studying. Since access to further education depended on the result of exams that they had not yet taken, they were still not sure of their options, but most of them had some ideas about the education and jobs they wished to pursue in the future. The following is a brief outline of these ideas.

All but one of the Spanish students wanted to continue to the bachillerato. Some of them saw this directly in relation to their future profession. Natalia and Sofia, for example, wanted to go on to study for the bachillerato as they believed this would improve their opportunities to work in something that they liked,

Sofia: I want to do my bachillerato so that I can do a course so that I can work. I want to work in a kinder garden, ok. Well, if I don't have the bachillerato then I cannot do what I want.

Natalia: I, for example, want to study my bachillerato, after finishing the ESO I want to study for my bachillerato, because if I do the bachillerato I can study cosmetics, which is what I want - cosmetics or beauty.^{lii}

Most of them were, however, not completely certain about what they wanted to do in the future and saw the bachillerato more as a general way of progressing. Celia, for example, said that she did not know very well what she wanted to do in the future, but that she aimed for a technological bachillerato and then a degree in engineering or maths. Similar to her, Manuel and Ricardo did not exactly know what they wanted to do in life, but still both knew that they would like to do a bachillerato in arts. Their preference for the arts bachillerato was not so much based on the direction they believed their future jobs would be in, but more on the perceived easiness of the level. Javier and Miguel also wanted to do a bachillerato, but similar to Manuel and Ricardo they too were without a very clear idea of the future that this would lead to. Finally, Araceli, who they were interviewed with, was the only Spanish interviewee, who mentioned wanting to do a specific vocational training degree.

Among the students from a migrant background, who were in their last year of compulsory schooling, the picture was a bit more varied. Many of them wanted to continue on to the bachillerato, but some also wanted to do specific vocational training degrees. Similar to the young people of Spanish origin, several of them had not completely decided their future path, but most had an idea about the sort of work they wanted to do. Alejandro, for example, said that he would like to work in architecture, Luisa wanted to become a doctor, and Mario wanted to work with computers. In Luisa and Mario's talk about the future, Luisa furthermore pointed out that the educational direction which Mario was planning to take (Vocational Training) would allow him to study and work at the same time. Also Jorge and César mentioned this concern in their interview. They both wanted to do something with design or advertising, but as the following shows, they focused more on the end goal than on the exact way to that end.

Jorge: *I don't know, I want to go to bachillerato, and after that to university and do something with computers. Something like that.*

César: *I am the same, I am almost the same for the computers, then the bachillerato or, if not, a vocational training, advanced vocational training in computers, or finishing fourth [year], maybe⁴², I don't know.*

Clara: *And on what depends whether you will do a bachillerato or vocational training?*

César: *It is almost the same, because after doing advanced vocational training in computers I can return, I can do a bachillerato if I like. I don't know if I am to start working. Having already a higher degree, I can begin to work while I study at night, I don't know.*

Jorge: *Yes, something like that.*

César: *But more or less, it will come out the way you want.* ^{liii}

As this illustrates, some of the boys considered working at the same time as studying, and this did, to some extent affect their choice of educational direction. Nadia also mentioned the importance of work opportunities as the background for her choice of further studies. Her considerations, however, focused on the relevance of her future profession in both Spain and her country of origin – Ukraine,

Nadia: *I want to do something in 'grado medio', health, I am going to health, I will go for pharmaceuticals, and I don't know, I have a lot of papers about that... after the Intermediate Specific Vocational Training I will go for the Advanced Specific Vocational Training in, what is the name, dental profession, I like that.*

⁴² César is here referring to the fact, that he may not pass the school year (the fourth year) and will have to repeat it before being able to continue to further education.

Clara: *To become a dentist?*

Nadia: *Yes, there are prospects here in Spain or if I go to Ukraine for example, there are prospects in that.*^{liv}

The above quotations are all from student who were about to finish the 4th grade of ESO. Even though they did not know for sure whether or not they would pass the year or would have to repeat, most of them did, as the interview extracts show, have some idea of ways to move towards their future goals. The majority of them planned to do a bachillerato, even though there were slightly more among the migrant students who considered another option, such as the vocational training. There also seemed to be a certain gender pattern as all the girls, except for one, were aiming for work within different types of care, whereas those of the boys, who already had an idea, were looking towards more technical work, mainly with computers. Finally, Nadia shows how some migrant students consider the way in which a future profession would have prospects in both Spain and their country of origin, suggesting a transnational orientation.

For the migrant students from the bridging class, who still had one or more years before they would be leaving secondary schooling, their wishes for the future were, as could be expected, less clear and they had not considered the way these wishes could be obtained to the same degree as the older students. Gloria, for example, wanted to be a doctor, and her twin sister Phoebe, a pilot,

I would like to be a pilot. I like to drive a plane, I like to be in the plane, I like to give the people food or anything they want. I want to be a stewardess, to serve people.

Their friend Mingxia also had several ideas, as she explained,

I don't know yet [what I want to do in the future], I would like a lot [of things], nurse, teacher or manager of a cafeteria.^{lv}

Diogo wanted to become a football player, and both Álvaro and Neculai wanted to be policemen. Rafiq, a boy from Morocco said he would like to work with computers, or maybe something with lights and finally also Alina had several parallel wishes. Two of them were based on her interests and abilities, the other one was linked to the aspirations of her two best friends - Sascha and Yazmin - illustrating a certain degree of peer capital:

Clara: *What would you like to do in the future?*

Alina: *Well, stewardess, or look, I for example skate very well, I have skated for 12 years, I have skated almost since I could walk. And I have won several prizes and trophies in my country for skating. There are a lot of competitions in my country, and in my city I have won more than four times.... And also in swimming... and then, that's it, I don't know what I am going to do, something with languages. I have seen that in Spain there are also classes to teach small children how to skate, you know. And I have said, that in the morning I could for example do some classes to become a stewardess or something like that and after that in the afternoon help the small kids learn how to skate....Or I also like to take care of infants, the small children. Yasmin also likes this and also Sascha, so we will all do the same.*^{lvi}

As this shows, the young people of immigrant origin, who were in the bridging class, also had ideas about what they wanted to do in their future, but the ideas were not as concrete as those of the older young people. This should, of course, be seen in relation to their age, and the time that they would have to spend in secondary schooling before having to move on to another educational level. Another factor, which needs to be considered in relation to their general vagueness, was the uncertainty surrounding their future status, and this was, as the

following sections describe, one of the things that distinguished them clearly from their Spanish and more settled migrant peers.

5.2.1. Influences on the future lives of young people in Madrid

For the young people in Madrid the main factor influencing their future was their families. All of them believed that their family would have an important role in their future lives, even though some focused on their immediate family and others included more extended and transnational family ties. In addition to their families, some of the students mentioned friends, teachers, effort, and political issues as possible future influences. Finally, there was a clear underlying theme, particularly in the interviews with migrant students, which related to the uncertainty of their situation. The theme of uncertainty forms the background upon which a lot of the narratives must be understood and therefore this section of the chapter begins with an analysis of the role of uncertainty in the young people's future lives, followed by a discussion of the themes brought up by the young people themselves.

Theme 1: Uncertainty

When asked where they thought they would be in 5-10 years time, many of the young people in Madrid, regardless of their background, were not quite sure and seemed to find the question rather abstract. Nevertheless, their answers revealed some important points and some interesting differences between Spanish and migrant students.

The young people of Spanish origin most often focused on family, work, and location in their narratives. In 5-10 years time, they were hoping to be working, studying, or maybe having a family and, in the case of two of the boys, to have a *casita* (a little home) in the neighbourhood. Similar to them, many of the young people of migrant origin talked about family, work, and location in their expectations of the future. It was, however, clear that

their future lives were shaped by quite different considerations, most significantly the uncertainty of their future location. Talking about their lives ten years from now, César and Jorge, for example, explained that they were not sure where they would be,

César: I don't know, in ten years, I don't know if I am still here [in Spain], we'll see, maybe not, because going to Ecuador and go back to Ecuador, but like this for a while until I have the nationality, who knows, I don't know. I am not completely clear about it, because my mother wants to go back and all that.

...

Jorge: That is what's happening with mine.

Clara: Your parents also want to go back?

Jorge: My mother. My father wants to be here.

César: My mother also wants to return to there, because she doesn't feel good here...

...

Jorge: It's because here, one almost only has time to work, go home, eat, when the weekend comes, one cannot go out anywhere because one rests,

César: You have to rest.

Jorge: Because you work very hard. My two parents work very hard and get home very tired. And that's the way it is almost every day.

César: There with the business, you get on well.

Jorge: Much more relaxed.

César: More relaxed, she is with the family and knows everyone.

Jorge: and the quality of life.^{lvii}

Also Alejandro said that he did not know where he would be in 5-10 years and conveyed an experience, similar to César and Jorge in terms of his parents' preferences, albeit more explicitly economic,

My parents have planned to go back [to Colombia] within two years, because here the economy is a bit difficult.⁴³ So, quickly save and go back to my country. But I will study, doing the profession I have done and practice it.^{lviii}

Similar to Alejandro, Diogo mentioned the influence of economic aspects, when talking about his future location, but the possibility of relocation was for him more immediate. He was going home to Brazil for the summer, and did not yet know whether or not he would be coming back, or staying with his father in Brazil, "it's because my mother would like me to return, but if I return she can't save up money. It's because I cost a lot. It's because she has to buy food, etc."^{lix} The cost of living was similarly of concern to Iulian's mother, and combined with family reasons, Iulian was perhaps not coming back to Spain either after his summer holiday in Romania,

Iulian: There is a problem and that is that I don't know [what will happen after the vacation]. My mother would like to go to Italy to live, because her sister is there and my cousin that I lived with and who is more like a brother to me, since I was very small I lived with him. Well, here she doesn't have much work, well she has work, but she is just substituting another girl.

...

Clara: And you, would you also like to go to Italy?

⁴³ This fieldwork was carried out before the onset of the global recession. The current financial crisis in Spain has hit migrant disproportionately hard in terms of job losses and unemployment (Papademetriou *et al.* 2010: 99-107) and the difficult economic situation mentioned by Alejandro is therefore likely to have become more severe.

Iulian: *Phhu, of course. Because there is my family, a bit more distant, but there are my cousins, my mother's cousins, my mother's sister, my uncles, my mother's cousins. There are many that I know. And in all of Spain there is not anyone from my family.*^{lx}

Iulian's account illustrates that family links are an important part of migrants' decisions in where to go and his own wish to relocate to Italy furthermore shows the importance of family networks for young people's perceived well-being. Similar to Iulian, family also played an important role for Mingxia's parents preferences of location and, thus, her own situation.

Clara: *Where do you think you will be in 5-10 years? Will you be here?*

Mingxia: *I don't know, I don't know yet.*

Clara: *And your parents, do they want to stay in Spain?*

Mingxia: *My mother yes, but my father wants what my mother wants. My father [says]... I go here, I go there, ok.*

Clara: *And your mother?*

Mingxia: *But my mother only wants Madrid, because my aunts and uncles are all here. More than my uncle, my grandmother, the mother of his mother is also here. Everyone in Madrid. But my father, his cousin is in Barcelona.*

Clara: *So, you have family in Barcelona and Madrid.*

Mingxia: *Yes, and in Italy, my mother wants to be in Madrid, to my father it doesn't matter, he wants what my mother wants.*

Clara: *and you? Do you want to stay in Madrid only or does it not matter to you?*

Mingxia: *For now yes, because I don't know Spanish. I don't want to go*

anyway, I just want to go to China, but in June, not this one, because I have to study Spanish, but next year June and July I am going to China^{lxi}

As these quotations show, many migrant young people do not have a sense of a stable future location. This is in stark contrast with their Spanish peers, who as mentioned in the context chapter, lived in a neighbourhood where a large part of the population had been born and decided to remain. Another issue which was related to the young people's experiences of uncertainty was that their parents did not always have the same opinions as to where their children were supposed to be. While Mingxia's parents were both in Spain and according to her more or less in agreement on where to be, other students had only one of their parents in Spain. In some cases, this led to disagreements over whether the child should stay with the parent in Spain or the parent who was in the country of origin. Alina, for example explained that she was planning to visit her father in Romania over the summer and when asked if she would return she said, "If my father lets me go back to Spain, I will go back to Spain and begin a new school year, and I don't know."^{lxii} Later in the interview she added that her father needed to give her some papers in order for her to be able to return and she was not sure that he would do that.

Alina's story points out some of the issues involved when one of the parents emigrates and leaves a child with the other. Many migrants come to Spain alone and leave their children with relatives in the country of origin until they are ready to bring them (Aparicio 2007:1173; Aparicio Gómez and Tornos 2000:13; Colectivo IOÉ and Fernández 2007:55-56). This can create situations, like Alina's, or loyalty conflicts, as exemplified by the story of Marcial, who had stayed with his grandparents in Santo Domingo (Dominican Republic) after his parents had gone to Spain, and had only recently come over himself,

Marcial: I, at first, did not want to come here. Then after coming here I got used to it.

Clara: *And how come you didn't want to come?*

Marcial: *Because my grandfather was alone, because my grandmother had died.*

Clara: *So you lived with your grandfather there?*

Marcial: *Yes.*

...

Clara: *When you came here, what did you think?*

Marcial: *First I went to a 'locutorio' [phone shop] and called to hear how my grandfather was. And he was very sad. After that, I was told that when I get my papers I will go. I had to get used to it a bit and then, the other month I was told that they would sign me up for a school.*

Marcial was planning to go to the Dominican Republic in the summer holiday, but he had to wait for his papers to come through. When asked whether he himself would like to stay in the Dominican Republic or return to Spain after the holiday he answered that he would prefer to return to Spain:

I like it [Spain] better, but I feel sorry for my grandfather, but I like Spain more, because here are also my mother and my father and my brother^{lxiii}

Marcial's account illustrates the divided loyalties, which can arise as a result of migration and it shows the role, that not only parents, but also extended transnational family ties play for migrant youth and their perceptions of the future. In addition, Marcial's story introduces another crucial factor, influencing both the present and future location and life of young migrants – 'papers'. Like Marcial, several of the students were waiting for their papers to come through and were only able to visit their country of origin once that happened. In this period they were therefore constricted in their movements, and their options to visit family and friends were consequently limited.

The quotations above illustrate that young migrants' adaptation to a host society is not only a result of their own wishes and their reception in society, but also highly dependent on a number of other factors, most significantly the legal framework and immigration policy of Spain, combined with the influence of the economic situation and their parents' preferences. The young migrants' accounts show that the migration project was often not made on their terms or as a result of their wishes. This clearly distinguishes migrant youth from non-migrant and minority ethnic youth. Even though several of the young people in Birmingham expressed a wish to go abroad in the future, their wishes were not dependent on family members to the same degree. Whereas family played an important role in both contexts, its direct influence on the location of the young people in Madrid was something that distinguished them from their peers in Birmingham. This is important because it is likely that young migrants' willingness or emotional capacity to incorporate themselves in Spain (or other receiving countries) may be related to the circumstances under which they were brought there.

Acknowledging the agency of the young people, I did, however, ask them whether they themselves liked being in Spain. The answers to that question are not wholly distinguishable from the external factors which might actually be shaping their options, but their answers gave a good indication of what was important to the young people in relation to their future lives. Some of the young people like Alina and Phoebe, for example, explained that they liked Spain, because of the opportunities they got there.

Alina: I don't have to study so much to become something, you know, because in my country you study a lot, a lot, a lot, you know. And because of that, and I know that, here you have a future much better than in my country. That's why I have come.^{lxiv}

Phoebe: *I like it here in Spain because I like I want to get a good education. Because in Nigeria if you can't pay money, you cannot go to school. So my father brought me here to have more good education.*

For others, liking or getting used to Spain had been a process. Nadia, who said that she would like to stay in Spain, explained that the first months had been horrible, “I didn’t like anything, I wanted to go to Ukraine, but now I like Spain.”^{lxv} For many of the young people liking or disliking Spain, however, had a lot to do with the social relations they had or did not have in Spain. Jorge and César, who had both lived in Ecuador with relatives until their parents had brought them to Spain, explained, for example, that they felt good in Spain because of the family,

Clara: *And how was it to come to Spain?*

César: *For me it was good, because I was here with my mother, who I hadn't seen for five years ... and I feel good because I have a lot of family here. It goes well. A bit sorry for my brothers, but...*

....

Clara: *And you?*

Jorge: *Well, look, I came here, and I hadn't seen my father about seven years, and my mother five. Well, little by little they began to bring my brothers, and then, it came to that I had to stay alone with my aunts and that, it was very... and I came here.*^{lxvi}

Jorge and César are examples of children staying in the country of origin, while parents emigrate. The interview extract furthermore shows the close connection between affiliation to a country and social relations, supporting the previously made point that ties and networks play an important role for young people’s general well-being. This was something that Mario also described. When asked whether he liked Ecuador or Spain the most, he

answered that he liked both, “there because my family is there, and here because my friends are here.”^{lxvii} Finally, Diogo included social relations in his explanation of which country he preferred, but unlike the students quoted above, he preferred his own country Brazil,

Diogo: [I would like to] *go back. Here are my friends, but they are not my friends. But those from my country, when they want to be friends, they are your friends.* [emphasis made by Diogo]

Clara: *And what do you like the best, Spain or Brazil?*

Diogo: *‘Hombre’...*

Clara: *‘Hombre’?*

Diogo: *My country.*

Clara: *And what are the things in your country that you like?*

Diogo: *The people.*

Clara: *Are they very different from the people here?*

Diogo: *Yes. And the football, the places. I think all that.*^{lxviii}

The narratives given by the young migrants about their preferences or ideas of the future show that they, to an important extent, are influenced by family. They furthermore reveal an important difference between migrant and Spanish youth. On the one hand, both groups tend to focus on issues of work, family and location, when discussing future lives. Location is, however, much more uncertain for migrant youth. This is, in part due to political or societal factors such as immigration legislation and the economic situation of the country and in part, the emotional difficulties facing them as a result of their emigration and the breakup of their family. Still, the main reason for many of the young migrants’ uncertainty was the reluctance of their parents to make Spain their permanent home, emphasising the multi-faceted role of family.

Theme 2: Family

The influence of family was something that came out very clearly in the young people's accounts of their plans for the future. When asked directly, who they thought would influence their future, most of them, both migrants and non-migrants mentioned their parents or other family members. For both groups, family was most often talked about in relation to the help and advice they provided. Nadia, for example wrote down her mother as the first post-it note and explained that,

She is always helping me, when things don't come out she always help me, and she tells me how to say this, how I have to do this, she always says 'good', and so...^{lxix}

Mario and Luisa also mentioned the advice they got from their parents,

Mario: *Well, they give you advice and that...*

Luisa: *That we continue something, because it is for our own good.*

Clara: *And what do they say about your plans?*

Luisa: *That I am free to choose what I want.*

Mario: *Hmm, that I should continue studying. Because if I don't, I will end up in a job that I don't like and that...*^{lxx}

César and Jorge similarly mentioned their parents, but as the following extract from the interview with them shows, they also saw other family members as influential factors for their future,

César: [my mother] *helps me and all, she tells me what I have to do, she pays all that I want for me to study. And all that, she helps me a lot so that I can study, continue studying.*

Clara: *And your parents [to Jorge]?*

Jorge: *Well, they give me advice, they help me, they tell me which things to do and which not to do. And they say that what I want to do, I should do, and they help me in everything, that is, with what I need them to give me.*

Clara: *And your brother* [referring to a post-it note]?

Jorge: *My brother, the same, he helps me in what he can, always telling me yes, and also partly my sister, in what they can they help me, they give me advice, they tell me what I ought to do.*

Clara: *And uncles and aunts* [referring to another post-it note]??

Jorge: *The same.*

César: *The same, they help you, they help you almost like a mother or father, they help you when you need something.*

Clara: *And your uncles, aunts and family members are here or in Ecuador?*

César: *For me, yes, some uncles, I only have one aunt here, some cousins and that. But my grandparents and everyone are there* [in Ecuador].

Jorge: *I spent almost all my childhood with them*

César: *I was with my grandparents until I came* [to Spain].

Jorge: *There is almost no difference for me, [between them and] my parents.* ^{lxxi}

As described earlier, several of the migrant students, like Jorge and César, lived a substantial part of their lives with other relatives in their country of origin and had therefore often close relations with them, even after emigrating. In these cases family support was not necessarily restricted to family members, who were in Spain, but could also include transnational ties with extended family. Illustrating the importance of transnational networks, also Diogo mentioned his grandmother who was still living in Brazil, among people whom he thought would influence his future,

Diogo: *They [my mother, my grandmother, my best friend and my girlfriend] help me and when I do something bad they help me, but they help me to improve. They help me when I need something, when I am sad or, I don't know, they help me, they make me happy and when I do something bad they are always there so that I can do good things.* ^{lxxii}

As these quotations show, the young migrants brought up a number of different ways in which their family provided help and support. One was assurance and motivation (e.g. to study), another guidance (e.g. to improve and not do bad things), a third type of help and support was more explicitly economic, and finally, help with language and schoolwork was mentioned by some of them. This last type of help was also mentioned by Natalia and Sofia and as the following shows, it is not only migrant youth who rely on other family members than parents.

Natalia: *Family, but within my family the one who helps me the most is my sister, my mother helps me a lot, but I have, I don't know, my sister has more experience and she helps me more, cares more... Maybe because she is doing a degree she cares more. My mother also cares, but my sister is always after me, because she knows, she also supports me.*

....

Sofia: *I don't have [brother or sisters], but my mother helps me. Hombre, my grandmother is not going to help me, because she hasn't studied.*

Natalia: *Of course, hombre, my mother hasn't studied, but maybe my mother gives me advice, but my sister has more experience.*

Sofia: *My aunt and my mother always says, 'you are not going to be like me, finish like me, see how I work, I don't like it, but there is nothing else, so you study'.....* ^{lxxiii}

As mentioned in Chapter 4, the educational level of the Spanish parents was not particularly high, and the way this affected their ability to help their children is well illustrated by Natalia and Sofia. Rather than being able to receive help directly related to schoolwork, the help they received from parents and family was more in terms of advice and what could be called ‘anti-role modelling’ – using themselves as an example of what not to do (a phenomenon, which was also seen in the English fieldwork). The importance of having a job that you like, or a job, which wouldn’t involve working too hard was something that came up in several of the interviews, also with the migrant students. Omar, for example said he wanted to study in order not to work too hard and Mario said that his family motivated him to study so that he could find a good job. Their focus on ‘good jobs’ or ‘not working too hard’ may, to some extent have been based on their parents’ occupation. Among the migrant parents a large proportion of the women were working in cleaning and many of the men in construction, both jobs which in Spain are typically occupied by migrants and which are some of the ones with the worst working conditions (Solé 2003: 123). The Spanish parents did, however, also have relatively hard and low-paid jobs, due to the location of the school in a predominantly working class neighbourhood. Most of the mothers were working with elderly people or in cleaning, and the men had small businesses. It is therefore perhaps not surprising that the young people placed great emphasis on becoming someone, and not having to work so hard, and that their parents or other family members used themselves as ‘anti-role models’.

To summarize, family played an important role in the perceptions of the future of both migrant and non-migrant young people in Madrid and, similarly to the situation in Birmingham, family was talked about in relation to their future plans in a number of different ways, most importantly help, support, and ‘anti-role modelling’. In Madrid the family was furthermore given an almost exclusive role as an influence on the young

people's future, in that very few students actually directly mentioned things other than family, as influences which had a bearing on their future plans. This may, in part, be due to the fact, that the post-it exercise did not work as well in Madrid as it did in Birmingham, and that the young people in general did not put down a lot of notes. Or it could, as indicated by Araceli, be because they didn't consider other influences as important as family, "there is no one like your family. You can have a very close friend, a teacher, but they won't help you like them." ^{lxxiv}

There were, however, some students who brought up issues in addition to family. These influences – friends, teachers, personal effort, and politics – will be discussed below. They do not have such a broad backing in the interview data as family, but they are still worth mentioning, either because they were indirectly touched upon by other students in some way or because they provide a comparative link to the English context.

Theme 3: Friends

After family, 'friends' was the factor that was mentioned most often in relation to plans for the future. Javier, for example, said that, "friends give you advice about what you want to do and that" ^{lxxv} and Natalia and Sofia described how friends would encourage them to pursue their goal,

Sofia: Friends, well, the same as the family, or a bit more in that they help you, come and study and that, because if they say 'don't do anything', well...

Natalia: Of course, there are some who always, maybe there are some who quit studying and work in whatever job and I don't know what, who go and work. Maybe you don't say like them. There are others who always say, 'don't be stupid, study, soon you will have your hair removal salon', and I

don't know, 'soon you will have kids'. They always help you in what is best for you. ^{lxxvi}

Natalia and Sofia's account demonstrates the difference between friends who are studying and those who are not, and the motivation they received from the former illustrates the role-modelling aspect of peer capital (Carbonaro 2004: 6). Similar to this, César and Jorge also mentioned the help they received in terms of motivation from friends,

César: In that they [friends] help you, they give you advice. That you have to study something in order to move forward. Have a career, a future and all that. They respect you and help you in all that they can, and such, those are good friends, all are helping you.

Jorge: Yes, all. ^{lxxvii}

The support and advice these four young people got from their friends illustrates the importance of peer social capital in creating pro-educational values and motivation. Several of the other young people also mentioned friends, but in a more general way. Araceli, for example, said that when you were working all day on your own it was important to have friends in your spare time and Yazmin mentioned her best friend Alina as a factor, which she believed would have an influence on her future,

Well, I don't know... in the future we are not going to split, and she says that one day in the future she will go to Morocco and I to Romania. ^{lxxviii}

The students quoted here to some extent described the role of friends as similar to that of their families, in that they would mainly help and give advice, but also explained the social relevance of having friends. From the amount of post-its written by the young people on friends it was however clear that they did not play as important a role as family. The same was the case for the teachers and the school.

Theme 4: The teachers and the school

When discussing what they wanted to do in their future, several of the young people in the last year of secondary school said that they had received information or help from teachers. Nadia had got some information material from some of her teachers and explaining her post-it note on teachers and their influence on her future she explained,

The teachers are those that are here now, they help me with my studies, afterwards they are going to help me in the future with my language, learning Spanish or learning the profession that I choose.^{lxxix}

Also Natalia mentioned the school as a factor influencing her future and explained,

Well, they give you options, the teachers talk to you. They say, 'you have these options, I don't know, what do you want to study?' Maybe they direct you a bit towards what you want to study. Maybe I want to do aesthetics and they say, 'Look, do this work so that you can find out what you want to study, what this study has'. They help you to see many things and give you a lot of information. It's good so that we can see what you want to do and how you want to do it.^{lxxx}

For some of the students, teachers did therefore play a certain role in their future aspirations, either as an abstract category which would be part of future educational institutions, as mentioned by Nadia, or as a motivating force, which indirectly would help them make their future choices. Even though teachers were not given the same role as the family, this points to the importance of teachers and the school in laying out the options and providing young people with sufficient information to pursue their future wishes.

Compared to the school in Birmingham, the school in Madrid did not convey a strong 'success-discourse'. Even though the school year was approaching its end, there was very little talk about the future choices that the students had to make, outside of the classes

specifically designated to discuss this topic (mainly tutorials). Only on one occasion did I hear a teacher talk about the motivation and effort which the students would have to have in order to succeed. However, many of the young people still expressed a belief in their own abilities and in the importance of having a pro-active approach.

Theme 5: Effort and Politics – individual and structural influences

Similarly to Birmingham, the students in Madrid placed great emphasis on their own effort and motivation. The one who mentioned this most directly was Nadia who wrote *esfuerzo* (effort) on one of her post-it notes and explained, “I have to make a lot of effort to learn all this that I want to learn. The first thing is language, the second is my profession, which I will choose, and after that I will have to go work.”^{lxxxii} When asked whether she thought everyone had the same opportunities in the Spanish society Nadia furthermore answered:

“Yes, I think so, because if you want you go study, you go to work, you will go do something to live, and if you don’t want you will sit in the metro and say give me ten centimes to eat, for all that, because I am sick. Sometimes it is true, that they don’t have anyone here, they don’t have a house, they don’t have job, and they have to ask for money to eat. But there are those, there are other people who say ‘help me, help me’ and then they go to buy beer afterwards, buy drinks, buy joints, I don’t think that is good. Because here in Spain there are many options to work, to study.”^{lxxxiii}

The opinions of the rest of the students on structural and individual influences came out when I asked them if they believed that everyone had the same opportunities in the Spanish society. As a response to that question, Omar expressed an idea similar to Nadia’s about people’s own responsibility for making a living. He explained that he did not believe that

everyone had the same opportunities, but rather than relating this to structural barriers, he saw it as a result of their own characteristics,

Omar: *Yes, not everyone has the same opportunities. Some have the heart to make a living. Others have the opportunity, but it is not the same. Some have the heart to look. And others don't have the heart. They say, I don't want to work, it is very hard, see that one, only wants to have work.*

Clara: *What do you mean by 'heart'?*

Omar: *I don't know how to say it in Spanish, but in French it is 'courage'.*

Clara: *But can you explain to me what it means?*

Omar: *'Heart', like some say this work is hard. Others don't see that, they just want to find a way to get out of their situation. They want to improve their situation.*

Clara: *And those who don't want, what do they do?*

Omar: *only the ones who have a rich family say that they don't want to work hard. And me, because I don't have a rich family and I say I have to do this to make my life better.^{lxxxiii}*

Similar to Omar, Rafiq did not believe that everyone had the same opportunities in Spain. He focused, however, both on abilities and determination, and answered that some people have a high educational level, some have a low one, “some want and cannot, some can and don't want – I want!”^{lxxxiv} Finally, also Phoebe focused on personal determination and explained that people had the same opportunities,

Yes, my father says that if you would like to do something, then you can do it. But if you don't like it, then you can do what you would like. Then there are some people who like to go to school and there are some people who do not like to go to school.

Nadia, Omar, Rafiq and Phoebe, thus, placed a great deal of belief in determination in their answers above, and emphasised their wish to try their best. Another point, which is clear from the last quotation, is the importance they give to education as part of future opportunities. This was supported by several of the students, as conveyed here by Diogo,

*I don't think [everyone has the same opportunity in the Spanish society],
because some people that don't study don't have a lot of opportunities. The
teacher has told me that if you haven't finished the ESO, you won't even
sweep the floor*^{lxxxv}

Mario and Luisa also focused on education when giving their view on whether everyone has the same opportunities in Spain.

Mario: *Depending -*

Luisa: *Those who have studies have more opportunities than those who
haven't.*

Clara: *Depending on what* [directed at Mario]?

Mario: *On the studies, on whether they are legal or not.*^{lxxxvi}

Education, thus plays an important role in the young people's perceptions of future opportunities. In this last quote Mario, however, also points to the previously mentioned issue of legal papers and in this way highlights that many of the young people are aware of structural barriers to success. A similar theme was present in the interview with Ana and Alejandro. Among the factors that Ana wrote down as influencing her future was the Spanish Prime Minister, Zapatero, and discussing this post-it note, she and Alejandro touched upon several topics, particularly important for migrants: the economy and possibilities to work. Zapatero is, of course, not the only person having an influence on these matters, but it is still important to mention Ana's and Alejandro's awareness of the economical and political situation and its potential influence on their future. Economy is, as

we have seen earlier, a significant concern for many migrants and for their children, and given the current financial situation in Spain, its role is likely to have increased even further. Other political issues, such as the legal framework for immigration have, as also mentioned earlier in this chapter, a very a significant and tangible impact on the lives of migrants. Finally, the way in which migrants are treated in Spain was brought up by Iulian, when asked whether he believed that everyone had the same opportunities in the Spanish society?

Iulian: *No, in my opinion they don't, it's like, there are many foreigners who don't have the same rights, it's like that you are put on the other side, even though you have the same faculty from the university and all that they treat you differently. I don't know, they can be in an office like others, but they encounter other problems. No, I don't think so.*^{lxxxvii}

Iulian thus focuses on discrimination and differential treatment of migrants, a point that has support in the literature (Solé 2003). Contrary to Iulian, his classmate Neculai turned the argument around and argued that people have the same opportunities in Spain, and that migrants have to behave,

Yes, I think that everyone has the same opportunities. But they have to behave well if they come from other countries. They shouldn't steal, they have to respect this country.^{lxxxviii}

As this shows migrant students had different opinions on the existence of equal opportunities in Spain and in their discussion of this question they showed varying levels of awareness of structural constraints. Contrary to this, all the Spanish young people interviewed believed that people did not have the same opportunities in the Spanish society and they explained this from very different angles than the migrant students. Miguel, for

example, focused on the phenomenon of immigration and how this, in his opinion created inequality, Araceli emphasised the role of the family and cultural capital:

Miguel: *the business people, for example, who have immigrants are much cheaper, and there are others who have Spanish workers and they are much more expensive.*

Araceli: *I see that because if you are from a family who doesn't care if you study and work, you will never have the opportunity of becoming a lawyer. If all our families helped us in everything then we would have the same opportunities.*^{lxxxix}

Also Manuel and Ricardo believed that different social groups had different opportunities, and similar to Araceli, they placed the focus on family conditions:

Ricardo: [There are differences] *because of the way some groups are.*

Manuel: *The family issue also. Depending on how they educate themselves*

Ricardo: *Because it is not as easy, a child with a family and a child who doesn't have parents or his mother doesn't have... doesn't have the same facilities, so there are not the same opportunities.*

Clara: *Ok, so for the family. And you said something about the way they are...*

Ricardo: *Yes, because, how can I put it, there are families that are on drugs and then the children aren't educated.*^{xc}

Finally, Celia brought the discussion back to politics and focused on gender and unequal opportunities for migrants,

First of all, since women, in order to make the same, they have to study twice as much, and nowadays, the foreign people, they are hired in fixed contracts, temporary and of very low standard. They have to have a very

strong education in order for them to be treated the same as any Spanish person with an ESO.

Clara: Do you think that will change in the future?

Celia: I hope, but Zapatero needs to be given a few more years and needs to be able to make a change, but I don't know. It's like, the generation has to change, because this generation has grown up in a period and think like this, but I think that it will change in a couple of years, or, [it will take] a few years to change this^{xci}.

As can be seen from these quotes, the Spanish young people in Madrid displayed a significant political and social awareness. Whereas the migrant students tended to believe in individual effort, and only to some extent included structural barrier in their narratives, the Spanish young people had a clear opinion on the influence of social stratification and different family background. The way this compares with the views of the young people in Birmingham on individual motivation and structural constraints will be discussed further in the following chapter.

5. 3. Summary

As this chapter has shown, most of the young people in Birmingham and Madrid had some ideas about what they wanted to do in the future and how to get there. All of them wanted to continue studying after compulsory secondary schooling, even though some of them, particularly migrant students, considered combining their studies with work. The factors that they believed would influence their future were also, to some extent, similar. Most of the young people had a strong belief in their own abilities and in the importance of education. In both contexts, family was seen as the most important influence, and relations to family members were often considered as an important part of the young people's

general well-being. This supports the point made in the previous chapter, that socio-emotional well-being should be considered as an outcome of social capital.

The analysis has, however, shown that there are also important differences, particularly between the way that migrant and non-migrant students are affected by the decisions of their families and external factors, such as legal status. In addition, the young people in Madrid paid greater attention to structural barriers when discussing the issue of equal opportunities. In the following chapter these differences will be explored further and placed in a larger theoretical and comparative context.

Chapter 6: Comparing the experiences of young people in Birmingham and Madrid

In the previous two chapters, research questions one and two were discussed, exploring the schooling experiences and life projects of the young people in the study and the main influences that they identified as important for their schooling and life projects. The aim of this chapter is to discuss the third research question, the differences and similarities between them. The chapter draws together the main points made in chapter four and five, and on the basis of a comparison between them, provides points for discussion and recommendations.

6.1. Schooling experiences in comparison

6.1.1. The role of friends and social interaction

In both Birmingham and Madrid, friendships and social interaction was the main issue discussed by the young people in terms of schooling, and this was regardless of the ethnic or national background of the interviewees. Friendships were connected to general well-being and described as a source of help, as an incitement to come to school and as something that could make the school day more interesting and pass quicker. Lack of social contacts or negative social interaction, on the other hand, could be a source of insecurity, loneliness and stress, and could furthermore make a difference as to whether the young people liked the school, or, in the case of some of the migrants, even the country. Recently arrived migrants who had a limited knowledge of the language, particularly described problems of making friends and engaging in social interaction. This emphasises the vulnerable position of this group.

The focus given to social relations by the young people highlights the potential of looking at education in terms of social capital. The social capital of children and young

people has most often been analysed in relation to parents, but in line with more recent studies of peer social capital (e.g. Ream and Rumberger 2008; Ryabov 2009), this analysis shows that it can also be usefully applied to peer relations. Social capital theory emphasizes the importance of social ties and networks in accessing or creating resources (Bourdieu 1986:248-249; Coleman 1988:98). The availability of these specific resources inheres in the structure of relations between actors and would not be accessible if these relations were missing (Coleman 1988: 98). This is highly relevant in relation to the data presented, because the young people, as seen, focused a lot on their social ties with their friends and peers and how these were a way to access help with schoolwork as well as create well-being within the school. Two main sets of 'resources' could, thus, be detected in their narratives: support with schoolwork, and general socio-emotional well-being. The latter, especially, was clearly not accessible if social relations with friends were missing. Educational research using social capital theory most often focuses rather narrowly on achievement and attainment. However, as the narratives of the young people in this study suggest, it is useful to consider outcomes of social capital in a broader perspective, which includes the more holistic goal of 'feeling good' or 'being well' (Bankston and Zhou 2002).

The literature on peer social capital, and on the influence of friends on schooling, has shown that having school oriented friends can have a positive effect on young people's approaches to schooling, whereas negative peer pressure can prevent young people from achieving (Carbonaro 2004; Ream and Rumberger 2008; Ryabov 2008). This dual role of friends was also described by the young people in my study. On the one hand, friends and mates could be distracting or constitute bad influences, on the other, they could be an important source of help, both in terms of schoolwork and more emotional support. This again emphasises the importance of well-being as a potential outcome of social capital.

Coleman argues that human capital may be high in a family, but relatively insignificant if social capital is absent (Coleman 1988:110). Along a similar line, it could perhaps be suggested that a high educational level of students in a given school alone may not benefit students who are not able to form social ties. In this study, these students were most frequently migrants with little knowledge of the language. For obvious reasons this group is disadvantaged due to its lack of understanding of the language of instruction. From a social capital perspective they are, however, also disadvantaged because they do not have the same possibilities of creating social networks and through this access social capital, which, in turn, could help them develop human and cultural capital (language, educational qualifications and knowledge of the society). This illustrates the link between language and social interaction, mentioned in previous chapters. It also emphasises the need for a critical way of looking at social capital, highlighting issues of unequal and constrained access and analysing how social ties are formed by different groups of migrants and minority ethnic youth in multicultural school contexts. In relation to this, the comparison between the school in Birmingham and the one in Madrid provides some important points.

When discussing how friends were made, the young people in Birmingham mentioned three main ways: in class, through sports or extracurricular activities, and through a contact person (a buddy or another friend - 'snowballing'). Several of them furthermore mentioned that friendship groups developed over the years, that they would get to know each other as they passed through the classes together, and that inter-ethnic relations became easier with time. In Madrid, ways of making friends or mates were fairly similar to Birmingham, and most of the students knew each other from class, through a common break time activity (mostly football), or in the case of a few of them they had been presented through others. In terms of the first 'friendship making factor' – through class, the external conditions which shaped group interaction in Madrid were, however, different than in Birmingham, because

many students in Spanish secondary schools repeat one or two school years and therefore do not have the same continuity with their classmates as they do in Birmingham. On the other hand, students in Birmingham are divided into sets and therefore do not spend as much time together with the same students during a regular school week. Still, seen in light of the data from Birmingham, which showed that inter-ethnic friendships developed over the years, it could be suggested that the lack of continuity in Spain may make it harder for migrant groups to make friends with their classmates, since there is a higher probability of them repeating a year than non-migrant students (Jiménez and González 2009:41-42). This may thus affect their possibilities of accessing social capital.

In relation to the second factor – a common break time activity - football (and to a certain extent basketball) was popular among boys in both schools. This provided them with a common activity and an opportunity to meet students from other backgrounds and year groups. Sports therefore provided an arena for boys to mix, which was not to the same extent available to girls, or used by them, in either of the two research contexts. The importance given to football emphasises the need to develop activities within the schools that can facilitate interaction. It furthermore supports the case for developing activities specifically for girls, in order for them to have similar opportunities to mix and make friends across year groups and ethnic/national backgrounds. As pointed out by some of the migrant boys in Spain, playing football together with others does, however, not automatically lead to friendships, and sports can, in fact, also be an arena for exchanging insults or racist remarks. The question is therefore, how can ‘mates’ who are made through sports be turned into ‘friends’, whose interaction is less prone to insulting behaviour and thereby more likely to produce positive social capital?

Finally, as shown in the data, contacts can be an additional way to make friends. In Birmingham, two of the boys mentioned the ‘buddy system’ and in Spain, one of the girls

mentioned how she had been matched with another girl in gym class, and how this girl had subsequently become her friend. This illustrates that social ties may not only be based on young people's own characteristics (e.g. language), but can also, in several more or less direct ways, be influenced by the conditions created at the school. Given the importance of social contacts for young people, this study supports the case for such a 'buddy system' or deliberate 'matching' of recently arrived students with students who have been at the school longer. Who the students are matched with should, however, be carefully considered in order to benefit the students as much as possible, and not further their marginalisation.

6.1.2. Group interaction

Many of the students interviewed in Birmingham were in mixed friendship groups, and they often emphasised the positive aspects of having a diverse social network. In Madrid, most of the Spanish students said that their friends were from the same background as themselves. Migrant students most often had friends who were from a migrant background, even though not necessarily from their own national background. Migrants, thus, tended to have more diverse friendship groups, but friendships between Spanish and migrant students were less frequent.

To understand and analyse the different patterns of social interaction in Birmingham and Madrid, Putnam's distinction between bridging and bonding social capital (Putnam 2001) provides a useful framework. Whereas the young people in Birmingham often engaged in social interaction across groups and in this way created bridging social capital, the more grouped boundaries in Madrid would point to higher levels of bonding. The young people in Birmingham furthermore highlighted many of the positive aspects of being in mixed friendship groups, also supporting Putnam's argument that bridging social capital generates broader identities (p. 21-23).

The distinction made by the young people in Madrid between ‘mates’ and ‘friends’, however, complicates the comparison between the two types of social capital, because it introduces two levels of social contacts. Whereas close friendships in Madrid tended to be bonding, that is, between people of the same background (or in the case of migrants with others from a migrant background), many of the students said that at the more casual level of interaction they had mates from different backgrounds, indicating a certain amount of bridging. The distinction between mates and friends was not made by the young people in Birmingham, and therefore it is difficult to determine the level of interaction they had with the friends they referred to in interviews. Since several of the interviews were conducted with a pair of friends from different backgrounds it does go some way towards indicating a greater level of inter-ethnic mixing and bridging in Birmingham, even at the close friendship level. Still, the distinction made between friends and mates in Madrid, highlights the importance of looking at different levels of social interaction when describing levels of bridging or bonding social capital. In addition, it is important to recognize that the two types of social capital are not necessarily exclusive, and that the maintenance of co-ethnic networks does not have to limit integration into the wider society or engagement in cross-cultural networks (Ager and Strang 2008: 186).

Another important point arising from the data is that in spite of the differences in group interaction at the friendship level, the young people in *both* Birmingham and Madrid described the general social interaction at their school as rather grouped – characterised by bonding social capital. This illustrates that own-experiences and experiences of others may not always coincide. The way in which the young people constructed and talked about the constitution of groups was, furthermore, not the same and did, to a certain extent, reflect the respective national discourses. In Birmingham, the pupils talked about groups in terms relatively similar to that of the ethnic monitoring system – the Asians, the Africans,

Pakistani, Indian, Black British, etc, and this was in spite of the fact that many of the students described were born in England. In addition, other groupings, such as 'chavs' and 'skaters' were mixed with ethnic labels, suggesting also a certain focus on class or 'style', but mainly referring to white pupils. In Spain, there was a more simplified division into 'Spanish' and 'foreigner/migrants' or, if talking about the foreign/migrant group more in detail, distinctions were made on the basis of nationality. This relates to the national discourse, which uses a rather generalised language of 'Spanish' and 'foreigners/migrants', but it also reflects the recentness of migration into Spain, which has not yet allowed for migrants to form groups that can be termed 'ethnic'. Two of the young people in Madrid, Ana and Alejandro, however, used the term 'Latino' to describe themselves and thus hint to a potentially nascent use of ethnicity.

In practice, my observations showed that groups were formed in more complex ways than just on the basis of origin, and also additional factors - particularly language - played an important role. In their talk of groups in schools, none of the informants in Madrid described 'classed' groupings. Nevertheless, the unequal opportunities of different social groups were, as seen in the previous chapter, something they were very conscious of, and seemingly more so than the students in Birmingham. These different ways of talking about groups illustrate that when analysing group interaction in terms of bridging and bonding it is often not a straightforward process to decide what is an 'in-group' and what is an 'out-group' and this may be highly contextual - something that is not always recognized in social capital theory. Group interaction may furthermore, as illustrated in the data, be flexible and changing.

Finally, it is important to consider the different conditions for creating bridging and bonding social capital that young people of migrant and minority ethnic background face. These may be affected by aspects within the school, but also in the school system in

general. The descriptions of group interaction in Birmingham showed that children may begin secondary school with very little experience of interacting with people from other backgrounds, and that this may affect inter-group relations. In an interview, Rajan, Ashraf and Saleem, for example, described how they felt strange about diversity when they first started at the school, but also how they, in time, got used to being around people from other groups and came to appreciate it. This supports the hypothesis that increased contact improves attitudes between groups (Van Oudenhoven *et al.* 2006: 43) and it shows that if the aim is to facilitate interaction between ethnic and national groups, the first step must, quite clearly, be to mix children of different backgrounds (not only ethnic, but also social) in school. As research has pointed out, mixing may, however, in itself not be enough (Lease and Blake 2005) and therefore the school environment and the facilities available for interaction are of high importance.

The school in Birmingham provided significantly more activities for the students, and the activities provided were very varied. A vast number of optional classes provided students with the opportunity to mix on the basis of common interests and there was a wide variety of extra-curricular activities, including Bollywood dance, street dance, drama, Arabic class, football, cricket, badminton, etc. The school in Madrid did not provide such facilities, and after school activities were mainly basketball, football and help with homework. Since the school was much smaller, a more extensive programme might have been difficult to sustain. The more varied selection of optional classes and after school activities should, however, also be seen in light of the longer tradition of migration into England, the multi-culturalist policies of previous decades, and the choices of the particular school, where the fieldwork was carried out.

Another major difference in terms of group interaction was the issue of racism. In Birmingham, direct racism between students was not given major importance by the

students. When asked directly several of them furthermore said that the racism that they had experienced in school was more like ‘friendly jokes’. In Madrid, there was a clear distinction between those of the students who described group interaction as good, and explained that they got along well with everyone, and those who described rather serious cases of racism and their feelings of not being welcomed by the Spanish. For this latter group, bridging was, thus, not necessarily an option and the positive aspects of bridging social capital (learning from and about each other) pointed out by the students in Birmingham were not available to them. Instead they engaged in bonding social capital, which gave them another type of outcome (a social life, well-being). The former group was mostly composed of Spanish students and Spanish-speaking migrants, and the latter of newly arrived migrants without prior knowledge of Spanish, a difference which again emphasises the importance of language.

6.1.3. Language

For students who had recently arrived to Birmingham or Madrid with no prior knowledge of English or Spanish respectively, language was a major issue. Because this group of migrants was a bigger group proportionally in the Madrid study, language had a more significant place in the Spanish data. Still, there were quite a lot of parallels between the experiences of migrants with no prior knowledge of Spanish or English in Madrid and in Birmingham. For many of them, language was perceived as a way to inclusion, and they often saw their lack of language as a reason for a lack of social contacts. As many of the newly arrived students pointed out, coming to the country or the school and not knowing how to talk had been a rather scary experience. Improving their language skills and making friends was often inter-linked and connected to feeling more comfortable. Nevertheless, the

conditions under which the students learned the language and interacted with others was significantly different in the two schools.

In Birmingham newly arrived students were designated a weekly number of special English classes (EAL-classes) according to their level, and the rest of the time they would follow regular classes. The policy of the school was to place the students in a set according to their academic level, but in practice this was often hard to obtain, mainly due to their language level. Most of them were therefore placed in the lower sets. The model in the school in Birmingham, thus, integrated migrant young people into a group of non-migrants quite quickly, but because they were often placed in lower sets, their main classmates were often from this segment of the school. This has implications for their educational opportunities, both because they potentially were receiving lessons below their academic level, but also because the lower sets were significantly more noisy and the time teachers could spend on supporting students with particular language needs was consequently more limited.

In Madrid, an almost opposite model was in place. Here the students would follow classes in a separate special bridging class for up to nine months and have a limited number of designated weekly classes with their reference groups. This model allowed the students a school year of intensive language support and made it possible for the teachers to provide the students with information about the school and the society in general, and thus build up their cultural capital. The students were, to a certain extent, concentrated in a special group, and their main social contacts while in this class were with other newly arrived students. Many of them said that they liked this group, and found it less ‘scary’ or intimidating than the reference group.

In spite of the different systems, recently arrived students without English or Spanish skills mostly interacted with other recently arrived students with limited language skills in

both Birmingham and Madrid. This suggests that it is language, to a higher extent than the specific way in which the school accommodates for newly arrived students, that has a role to play in social interaction patterns. In the Spanish context, it has been argued that the practice of separating migrant students into separate classes distorts their possibilities of integrating and leads to segregation. Therefore it has been suggested that a better approach would be to place them in mainstream groups (e.g. Permisán and Fernández 2006:212-213; Zufiaurre 2006:419). This study, however, suggests that bridging classes may to a certain extent act as a safe place for these young people, and that even when they are integrated into mainstream classes (in both England and Spain) they often still do not have a lot of social contact with their non-migrant classmates.

In their work on ‘the second generation’ in the US, Portes and his colleagues (Portes *et al.* 2008:6) argue that the context of reception has an important impact on the way in which second generation migrants integrate into the society. In situations with a high degree of exclusion, ethnic communities may provide an important source of support and mobility. Getting migrant students to feel comfortable about expressing themselves in English or Spanish is quite clearly of importance and, based on the narratives and experiences of newly arrived students in this study, it seems that this would facilitate their social interaction with other students more than any specific ‘reception’ model. Based on the points raised by Portes *et al.*, and on the negative social reception described by some of the migrant students in Madrid, it seems, however, that in order for them to have more social contact with their peers, integration into regular classes needs to be followed by an increasing attention to diversity and inter-culturalism.

Considering newly arrived students with limited English or Spanish knowledge as a group, their type of social capital shows a tendency towards bonding. The data thus illustrates how this type of bonding provides them with a specific type of resource/outcome

– safety and comfort. Nevertheless, if the different ethnic or national backgrounds of the students are taken into consideration, their social ties must to a larger degree be seen as bridging, illustrating the flexible nature of bonding and bridging networks. According to the theory of Putnam, engaging in bridging social networks enables actors and communities to create broader identities and “get ahead” (Putnam 2001:21-23). In the case of these migrant students, broader identities are clearly created, as they learn about each other’s cultures and languages. Whether or not their international friendships will help them get ahead is, however, another question, since most of these groups are disadvantaged in one way or another within the societies in which they live. Being part of a bridging network may therefore not necessarily present young people with resources that they can use directly to get ahead and much depends on the position of the groups with whom they bridge.

6.1.4. Feeling comfortable at school

The young people’s discussions of the role of friends and social networks in both Birmingham and Madrid, point to the importance of feeling comfortable and relaxed at the school. It was clear that the ‘informal’ and interactional aspects of schooling played a larger role in their narratives than the ‘formal school layer’ (Gordon *et al.* 1999). Interestingly, this was also characteristic for the students’ description of teachers and how they influenced schooling experiences. In both research contexts, the students’ descriptions of teachers centred on caring aspects, and good teachers were described as those who could understand and help students, take care of them and relate to them. In Madrid, the students furthermore emphasised the abilities of teachers to explain well and this was, not surprisingly, particularly important for recently arrived students. Some students talked about the teaching style, which they preferred to be interactive and dynamic, but the

greatest attention was placed on teachers' interactive skills and his or her 'caring' abilities. This also came out in some of the students' descriptions of bad teachers, who they would describe as shouting or unfair.

As part of feeling good or comfortable in school, the issue of cultural diversity was brought up by several of the students in Birmingham. Two of the boys (Marlon and Anesu, who were from a Mixed and Black African origin respectively) explicitly mentioned the importance of the multicultural character of the school and said that this made them feel more confident about themselves. Others mentioned that it was nice to learn about other people's backgrounds and that this had made them feel more comfortable around each other. Among the six girls, who explicitly talked about holidays or celebrations, there was some disagreement. Two of them believed the school was "full-on Christian" (Raveena and Jennifer), whereas two others complained that the school 'only' celebrated Eid (Vicky and Melanie). Finally, two other girls, who themselves were black, mentioned the importance of Black History Month. In spite of their varying experiences, it seems that diversity and the diverse backgrounds of the school population played a significant role in the minds of the young people in Birmingham, and that they, even though they disagreed, had a basic knowledge of each others' holidays or 'cultural specificities'.

Contrary to this, relatively little attention was paid to diversity at the school in Madrid. In spite of the many different origins of the students in the regular classes, references to the backgrounds of the students were conspicuously absent. The everyday realities of other countries or of people coming from other countries living in Spain, seldom figured in the teaching material or in the class conversations. My field notes, thus, contain few references to other countries or cultures.

In music classes, the students occasionally listened to different instruments and music styles of other countries and ages. The most 'exotic' example was the music of the Indian

Bollywood industry, but we also listened to early music from other European countries and Latin America. In English class, England and English customs were sometimes mentioned, but the main focus was on the language, rather than the country. In history, the students learned about the Russian Revolution and about colonial history. Finally, the most important arena for talking about other countries and cultures was the ethics lessons. During my stay at the school, topics such as racism and discrimination were discussed extensively as part of the general topic of human rights. The students had to look for information about countries where human rights were violated, and cases from specific countries were brought into discussion. In addition, they read an article about a Spanish woman, who had dressed up as a Muslim with a hijab and the different types of discrimination she had encountered as a result.

As can be seen from these few examples, the everyday life of people in the countries where the migrants of the class had come from, was relatively rarely mentioned. This should, of course, be seen in light of the recent nature of migration into Spain. Compared to England, Spain has a rather short experience of cultural diversity, and perhaps due to this, it did not play the same role in the consciousness of the students or the teachers. Nevertheless, there was a striking difference *within* the Spanish school, which suggests that differences between the two schools and contexts were not only a result of timing, but also of a more conscious multicultural approach in England. For whereas the regular classes in Madrid had no significant attention to the cultural background of the migrant students, the bridging class placed a significant focus on the countries and languages of the students.

In the bridging class, posters of emergency plans and how to say hello in all the languages figured in the classroom and many students expressed an interest in the diversity of languages. As part of their homework the students were asked to write a letter to someone in their own country about Spain. In addition, they had to write an essay about

their country, including the geographic situation of the country, the languages spoken, the food and the music. This contrast between the regular classes and the bridging class in terms of socio-geographical/cultural awareness is important. First, because it stresses the point made by Aguado and Malik (2001), that in Spain cultural diversity is most often dealt with in the form of compensatory actions and programmes (p. 159), and second, because it links difference very clearly to language. The only two interviewees who mentioned something, which could be understood as inter-cultural dialogue, quite interestingly also focused on language: Alina said that she liked to say things to the other students in her class in their language and that she would like to learn the language of her best friend, Yazmin. Yazmin mentioned that she would like to have an Arabic teacher at the school to teach the other students Arabic.

Language is, of course, a very important factor in both social interaction and learning, but, as the above discussion has shown, it is not the only thing distinguishing different groups of migrants from each other and from the non-migrant population. Migrants who know Spanish may also experience difficulties, stereotypes, and even racism, both in school and in the surrounding society. It may be argued that the Spanish approach makes people more 'equal' and diminishes the creation of differences (contrary to what critics of the multiculturalist approach have argued that multiculturalism has done in the English context). Based on the young people in Birmingham's accounts it does, however, seem that they quite liked learning about each other's backgrounds. And as can be seen from the narratives of the young people in Madrid, differences are constructed, also in an environment where they are not explicitly talked about, both because some young people are visibly different than the majority, because some of them do not know the language of the country, and because schools are not free of the stereotypes which are part of the wider society. Using the experiences of young people in Birmingham, it could be explored

whether stereotypes could be better countered and inter-ethnic interaction better facilitated in Madrid if the different backgrounds of migrant students were consciously noted and discussed, and if the students in this way were able to familiarize themselves with each other. This supports other studies that have called for a more direct inclusion of diversity in the standard Spanish curriculum (Aguado and Malik 2001; Fernández-Castillo 2009).

The focus on language as the main differentiating factor and background for additional support found in Madrid is furthermore limited because it overlooks the difficulties which Spanish-speaking migrants may face when coming to Spain. Language is quite obviously a major barrier, which migrants who already speak the language of the receiving society do not have to overcome. As discussed in chapter four, their social interaction and school-adaption may therefore be considerably easier. However, language is not only about words, and language differences can also consist in different ways of asking questions (Brice Heath 1982) or different structurally determined ways of speaking the language (Bernstein 1971; Mocombe 2006). This point was illustrated by some of the Latin American migrants in Madrid, who explained how they had not understood much on first arriving at the school. In addition, the narratives of some of these Spanish speaking migrants in Madrid highlight the major transition that this group also experiences by migrating and that migration does not always take place according to their own wishes. Depending on their previous school experiences in their country of origin, they may encounter differences in teaching styles and content, and experience lesser or greater extents of differences in the cultural, cognitive or interactional patterns existing in the school and in their home and home country. Finally, the emotional distress of having migrated may equally affect migrants who know the language. In addition to academic level and language skills, these emotional issues seem important to tackle within the school context, and make the case for increased support for migrants even when they speak the language of instruction.

6.1.5. The role of the family in relation to schooling

In relation to schooling, the role of the family was mentioned by several of the students in Birmingham, mainly as an encouraging and confidence building factor. In Madrid, family was not directly mentioned as much, but when talking about school and life in general, it was clear that family played an important role. For migrant students, different family members could help with language issues if they had been in the country longer, and for some of them, their main social contacts in the school were their siblings. Whereas the students in Birmingham explained that they got help from home, the students in Madrid said that often they could not get help because their parents' educational level was not as high as their own and for some of the migrant students, because the language level of their parents was limited. These differences illustrate the various degrees of parental cultural capital available to the young people in the study. As argued by Irwin (2009) parental support does not always have to be related to formal education, and parents with limited cultural capital may still be able to provide significant familial support (p. 343-344). For some of the migrant students though, the limited amount of time that which their parents spent at home due to work commitments put certain limitations on their possibilities of helping with school and thus restricted the family's social capital. For those students whose access to parental support and time was most limited, the help of extended family, siblings and friends became all the more important, supporting the case for including these additional networks in theories of social and cultural capital.

In general, the role of the family was, however, in both Birmingham and Madrid given much more importance in the young people's narratives of the future. This will therefore be dealt with in more detail in the last part of this chapter.

6.1.6. Schooling experiences in summary

The emphasis put on social interaction and friendships in school by the young people in both Birmingham and Madrid, makes it clear that research on migrants and minority ethnic youth in education needs to take these issues into account. This chapter has discussed friendships and networks from the perspective of social capital theory. It has argued that social relations are a major source of well-being, and that this in itself should be considered an outcome of social capital. The potential benefits of friends on school attendance, confidence in class and help with schoolwork, furthermore shows that peer social capital may also be conducive to achievement both directly and indirectly.

The extent to which the students were part of ethnically mixed friendship groups varied. Many of the young people in Birmingham were part of inter-ethnic friendships, whereas the situation in Madrid was somewhat more divided. Using the analytic distinction provided by Putnam between bridging and bonding social capital, it could thus be argued that young people in Birmingham engaged in more bridging social networks than the young people in Madrid, who to a higher degree engaged in bonding social networks. The difference described by the young people in Madrid between friends and mates, however, complicates these conclusions. Furthermore, the way in which young people of migrant origin created friendships across geographic borders showed that even though their networks mainly stayed within the 'Spanish/foreigner-divide', it would be too simplistic to consider them homogenous. These findings thus emphasise the importance of including different levels of friendships or networks in work on bridging and bonding social capital and furthermore, acknowledge the difficulties involved when trying to decide how in-groups and out-groups are constituted.

For migrant students recently arrived at either Birmingham or Madrid, without prior knowledge of the language of instruction, linguistic issues, quite naturally played a large

part in their narratives. The way in which these students were accommodated for was rather different at the two schools, but the outcomes were often the same, in that they would most often socialise with other students who had a limited knowledge of English or Spanish. This suggests that the language level of students in itself was the major barrier for creating social ties rather than the specific school system practised in Birmingham and Madrid. However, the way in which the non-Spanish speaking migrants were received by their peers in Madrid, and the rather dichotomous distinction between foreigners and Spanish recurring in many of the narratives, points to the importance of supplementing language teaching with more diversity awareness, and extending this into the regular classes as well.

Finally, the relatively little attention given by the young people in this study to teachers and parents is in sharp contrast to the vast amount of literature discussing the influence of teachers and parents on schooling. However, when they did talk about parents or teachers, they often focused on care and support, rather than on professional knowledge or direct help with school work. This shows that in relation to parental or adult social capital, broader notions of resources or outcomes, such as well-being and support, are important.

6.2. Life projects in comparison

The things that the young people in Birmingham and Madrid wanted to do after secondary school varied both according to their interests and the way in which they perceived their own abilities. Most of the young people in Birmingham wanted to go to college and only very few considered an apprenticeship. In Madrid, most of the students wanted to do the *bachillerato* (equivalent to college), but some of them also considered doing the more vocational programme, the *grado medio*, and this was more popular among migrant students than among Spanish students. In Birmingham, the most popular future career wishes were within health (doctors, nurses, and physiotherapist), arts (singers, actors or

dancers - reflecting the schools status as a performing arts school), business, and football. In Madrid, the most popular works were in computers, kindergarten, football, and health. Because of the relatively few numbers of research participants from different ethnic groups it is hard to say anything general about ethnic preferences. Nevertheless there were some gender patterns, especially in Madrid, where only boys expressed computers as a desired future career, and wishes to work in a kindergarten were limited to girls. In both countries, the dream of becoming a footballer was furthermore very specific to boys.

A limitation of my study is, of course, that I am not able to follow up on these ideas and see whether the students actually did, what they said they wanted to do. Data from the Longitudinal study and Youth Cohort study shows that in England more young people express an intention to continue into Further Education than the number, who actually do it (DCSF 2008b:22). As pointed out by Portes *et al.* (2009), the scientific literature, however, also illustrates that aspirations is one of the factors which best predict educational goals, because even though those who aspire high may not reach high, those who do not aspire will definitely not (Portes *et al.* 2009:9). Aspirations can therefore give some indication of young people's intentions and, perhaps particularly in the case of migrants and minority ethnic youth, say something about their perceptions of the country in which they live.

Furthermore, when looking at young people's future wishes it is worth considering not only what they want to do, but also why they want to do it. In addition to the more specific jobs or careers, which the young people mentioned, most of their narratives included an underlying motivation to 'make something of oneself' and an implicit idea about what constituted a 'good life.'

6.2.1. 'The good life'

In many of the interviews there was a strong emphasis on personal motivation and effort in relation to future lives. This was particularly the case among the young people in Birmingham and the migrant students in Madrid. The motivation was often described as a result of seeing other people either doing “good things” (role models) or doing “stupid” or “bad” things’ (what I have chosen to call ‘anti-role models’).

The young people in Birmingham described a number of factors which they believed would influence their future, most significantly family and role models, but also to a certain extent religion. Interestingly, religion was completely absent in the narratives of the students in Madrid, and it was only talked about if I specifically brought it up. The reason for this difference may be the larger role of religion within English comprehensive schools, but can also have something to do with the groups in question.

In terms of future wishes, the young people in Birmingham described their different family members as providing them with ideas of what they wanted to do, because they themselves were doing it. Wishes for the future and motivation could, however, also develop in spite of family’s educational and occupational level, and the conscious choice of wanting to do something different. This was similarly very clear in Madrid, particularly among migrant students, who often saw their parents working in hard manual or time-consuming jobs, and explicitly said that they wanted to study in order not to work that hard. Studies of social capital and the effect of social relations on educational performance have pointed out that the absence of positive role models can have a detrimental effect on young people’s aspirations. This study, however, shows that family and friends can also function as examples of what not to do and that this should perhaps be considered in social capital theory.

Besides looking to their families for inspiration, the young people in Birmingham also focused significantly on role-models outside of their family, and here they displayed a certain admiration for hard work, social mobility, wealth, and “doing good things.” Finally, some of them mentioned religion as a guiding factor that could help them avoid doing bad things in their live. Neither role models nor religion was mentioned by any of the students in Madrid. Whereas the main reference for the young people in Madrid was their family, the young people in Birmingham had a broader set of references, which included people living in the present and in the past. These provided them with images of what would constitute a good life and what definitely wouldn’t. The focus almost all of the young people placed on education as a way to get a good job and a good life in general was a common sentiment both in Birmingham and Madrid. Becoming somebody was, thus, seen as a result of doing well in school, and doing well in school was something that was presented mostly as the result of individual effort and determination.

One of the assumptions behind this study was that the wishes and ideas young people have for their future can be seen as a reflection of their perception of their own situation in society. Inspired by theories which look at different adaptation patterns of migrant and minority ethnic youth (e.g. Ogbu 1978; 1987;1990; Portes and Zhou 1993; Portes and Rhumbaut 1996), I wished to explore the ways in which migrants and minority ethnic youth perceived their future and future opportunities in England and Spain and whether there were any major differences between different groups. The data shows that particularly among the young people in Birmingham (of both migrant, non-migrant and minority ethnic background) and the migrant students in Madrid, a very strong belief in their own abilities and opportunities in society existed, somewhat contradicting the distinction often made between first and second (or third) generation migrants. What became increasingly clear during the fieldwork in Madrid was, however, that young people are not always in control

of their future lives, and that approaches focusing only on their aspirations or ideas about schooling may therefore be limited. In fact, a big difference between the migrant groups in Spain and all other group in the study was the extent to which factors, external to themselves, had a determining factor on the direction their future lives would take.

6.2.2. Family and future lives

For all of the young people in the study, family played a significant role in their descriptions of future lives. This was, as described above, both in terms of ‘role models’ and ‘anti-role models’, but also in a more direct sense. In Birmingham, the young people described how their families provided them with advice, support, help (both practical and emotional), and role model images. Some of them mentioned how their own wishes to make their families proud motivated them to do well in life. Finally, a few indicated that their family might have a more restrictive role, for example Jamila, whose grandmother perhaps would not allow her to work, and to a lesser extent Fawzia, whose parents wanted to decide her choice of A-levels, but left her with some room for negotiation. Mostly, the family members of the young people in Birmingham, from all ethnic backgrounds, were however described as promoting rather than limiting their future options.

In Madrid, parents and family members were similarly seen to give advice, support and help. As previously mentioned, the educational level of many of the parents made them unable to help practically with school work, but several of the students mentioned the more emotional support they would receive from parents and the help they would get from other family members if parents were unable to help them. The potential impact of family background was furthermore mentioned several times in relation to opportunities, especially by the Spanish students, highlighting issues of social inheritance and inequality.

For migrant students, family members had more influence than for any of the other groups in the study. First of all, as discussed in chapter five, they had a decisive influence on the present and future location of the students. Many of the young people had come to Spain to be reunited with their parents after years of separation and at times against their own wishes. Secondly, several of them were not completely sure where they would be in the future because their parents either considered going back to their country of origin or moving to another country. Finally, the narratives of the migrant students unveiled certain emotional conflicts connected to family and location, most explicitly illustrated in the account of Marcial, who was sad to leave his grandfather in the Dominican Republic, but himself preferred to be in Spain because of his parents. These accounts illustrate how the previous life of migrant students in their country of origin and the transnational ties they maintain with people there, have a significant impact on how the students feel after migration and to what extent they wish to remain in the receiving society or not.

In the literature, transnational ties have been shown to play a role for young people of migrant or minority ethnic background in several ways (e.g. in relation to education, Moldenhawer 2005). In this study, it was mostly migrant students who brought up links with their family in their country of origin. One minority ethnic student in Birmingham, Rafee, mentioned that he might work in the family business in his parents' country of origin in the future, but otherwise all references to countries of origin was made by migrant students. These references mostly related to people in the country of origin, whom the young people would stay in close contact with and rely on for support, or as in the case of one student, Nadia, to the wish to have an education that would be relevant in both Spain and Ukraine. In his theory on the difference between voluntary and involuntary minorities, Ogbu mentions that one of the characteristics of voluntary minorities is that they always have the possibility, at least in theory, to go back, and that this gives them more options

than involuntary minorities (Ogbu 1978:24). Seen in this light, Nadia's wish to take an education which is valued in both Spain and Ukraine could perhaps express a wish to keep both options open and in this way stay outside of the existing labour market structures, which are not always favourable to migrants in Spain.

In terms of family, the stories of the migrant students in Madrid stand in stark contrast to the narratives of both majority and minority ethnic youth in Birmingham. They point to the importance of several issues relating to young migrants: the extent to which migration is decided for them, rather than by them (blurring the line between 'voluntary' and 'involuntary' migrants), and the way in which future instability, again largely decided by others, affects their emotional and practical possibilities of adjusting to life in the receiving country. In addition to these family issues which particularly affect young migrants, there is another external factor which plays an important role for migrants in general, and thereby also children and young people of migrant origin - the legal and political situation.

6.2.3. Legal and political issues

The legal status of migrant and minority ethnic youth is a controversial and sensitive issue, perhaps especially in the current European context of increasing restrictions. In both Spain and England the topic of immigration is heavily debated, and it figured as an important issue in both countries' recent general election campaigns, in Spain in March 2008 and in Britain in May 2010. Aware of the potential sensitivity around the topic of legal status, I did not ask the young people directly about their status, and none of them specifically mentioned on what terms they had entered the countries. In several of the accounts of young migrants in Madrid, the issue of legal papers, however, came up. Some of them mentioned that they themselves were waiting for their papers to come through, others mentioned the difference in opportunities that other migrants have depending on their legal

status. This focus on legal matters was quite specific for the Spanish context, reflecting not only the recent nature of migration into the country but also the specifics of Spain's immigration policies, in which migrants have obtained papers through regularization processes. The young people of migrant backgrounds interviewed in Birmingham did not talk about legal issues, indicating that their situation was not, to the same extent as the young migrants in Madrid, dependent on them.

Another thing distinguishing the young migrants in Madrid from the other groups was the clear economic background for their parents' migration project. As mentioned in several of the accounts, parents were considering leaving Spain because of economic reasons, and the young people's stability in Spain was therefore to a significant extent dependent on the country's economic situation. In addition, several of the young migrants considered combining education and work, which may also point to the economic hardships of their family. Due to the global financial crisis, the economic situation of migrants is not likely to have changed for the better in the period after the fieldwork. On the contrary, the Spanish government has begun to respond to the situation by offering migrants cash-incentives to return to their country of origin (McCabe *et al.* 2009).

Finally, the more political or social climate in the two countries regarding migrant and minority ethnic groups was an issue, which came up in some of the interviews, particularly in Spain. A number of both Spanish and non-Spanish students in Madrid, mentioned social inequalities and inequalities between migrants and non-migrants, but did not relate these inequalities to their own situation in particular. In fact, many of them did, as previously discussed put a lot of emphasis on their own effort and will to make something of their life. In Birmingham, the young people similarly brought up a number of social inequalities, mostly related to income, but again did not make specific links to themselves or their ethnic group. One exception was Saleem, who mentioned that being a Muslim in Britain was

making life more difficult, mostly because of the way Muslims were portrayed in the British media. Similarly to Madrid, most of the young people in Birmingham, including Saleem, did however convey a belief in their own abilities and did not present their situation as significantly influenced by issues of discrimination or racism. They had therefore not constructed alternative beliefs of ways to ‘make it in life’ (Ogbu 1990:73).

6.2.4.. Life projects in summary

All of the students interviewed for the research wanted to continue on to further education, and for most of them education was an important path to what they considered ‘a good life’ – one in which they didn’t have to work as hard as their parents. There was therefore a lack of support among the students in the study for Ogbu’s idea (ibid) that some groups see other alternatives than education to succeed in life. This is not to say that these attitudes do not exist among young people, but they do not necessarily have to be connected to their specific minority status.

All of the young people gave family members an important role in their future lives and explained that they provided them with advice, support, help and role model images. Some of the young people portrayed their family members as positive role models, others explained that they provided them with images of what *not* to do. Such anti-role model images illustrate that family influence is not always direct and straightforward. Studies which look at the social relations of young people and the way they build their social capital should therefore consider these indirect or even ‘reverse’ types of role models.

In the lives of the migrant students in Spain, family members furthermore took on an additional role because they often had a rather significant impact on where the young people would be geographically located in the future. Their role in the migration process

also points to the importance of considering critically the concepts of voluntary and involuntary migrants when referring to children and young people.

Finally, the future aspirations and integration of migrant youth in Spain cannot be understood without including an understanding of the legal framework of their stay and the political and economic conditions upon which their stay is dependent. As all these points illustrate, theories of adaptation and integration, must look beyond the wishes and abilities of the migrants and include external factors as well – focus should not only be on what they *want* to do, but also what they in fact, *can* do.

Conclusion

Children and young people's lives and identities are complex and multifaceted. This project has explored many different influences affecting their schooling experiences and life projects by listening to the young people opinions and letting them take part in deciding what should be considered important. It has showed that even though the young people came from a number of different ethnic and national backgrounds and live in two rather different countries and urban environments, they focused on many of the same themes, when describing their life in school, their wishes for the future, and the influences which they believed affected the two.

In terms of education, the young people in both localities emphasised the influence of friends and social interactions in schools. The importance of friends and peers in young people's lives is recognized within youth studies (e.g. Bottrell 2008; Bradford Brown 2004; Cotterel 1996; 2007; Stanton-Salazar and Spina 2005), but educational research most often focuses on their impact on achievement and attainment (e.g. Gándara *et al.* 2004; Gibson *et al.* 2004; Ryabov 2008; South *et al.* 2003) and thus relatively little on their social role within the school context. The young people in this study, however, talked very little about achievement and attainment and focused almost exclusively on the processes of making friends and the effect that friends had on schooling. Following the narratives of the young people, the part of the thesis which dealt with schooling experiences therefore also centred on the different aspects of friendships and social interaction. The role of friends and social relations was analysed through the lens of social capital theory and it was suggested that the socio-emotional benefits of friendships and relations with peers should be acknowledged as a particular resource and potential outcome of social capital. Inspired by more critical studies of social capital (Leonard 2005; Morrow 1999), I furthermore argue that young

people's unequal conditions for making friends and accessing this type of social capital must be considered.

In terms of future lives, the influence most frequently mentioned by the young people in both countries was family, and their narratives showed that most of them relied on support from different family members. The support they received was, however, not always directly related to help in school or with careers, but often conceptualised in more general or socio-emotional terms. Similar to the points made in relation to friends and peers, this illustrates that in relation to parental or adult social capital, broader notions of resources or outcomes, including socio-emotional well-being and general support, are also important.

The analysis of the young people's accounts furthermore shows that low educational or occupational background of parents was not directly translated into low aspirations of parents and children. In fact, the low status jobs of many of the parents provided some of the young people with an incentive to aspire higher in life. Previous literature has made the link between family support and aspirations (e.g. Fernández and Puga 2007; Kao and Tienda 1998). The 'anti-role modelling' which several of the students in my study brought up is, however, an aspect seldom mentioned and one which shows that family influence is not always direct and straightforward.

Another point emphasised by the young people in both Birmingham and Madrid was the role of individual abilities in the creation of their future lives. There was a recurring belief in education as a way to a better future, and even though many of the young people acknowledged that some people experienced various structural constraints (poverty, discrimination, legal status etc.), they generally did not apply these constraints to themselves. Contrary to research showing the disillusion of particular groups in terms of education and labour market mobility (Ogbu 1978; 1990), the young people in this study

thus generally displayed a very positive outlook. From a policy perspective, the challenge must be to make sure that these positive outlooks are converted into an equally positive outcome.

In addition to these common trends experienced by the young people in both Birmingham and Madrid, a number of important differences were also seen in their narratives. These illustrate that even though friends, family, and individual abilities were important to all of them, the conditions under which different groups of young people make friends, the particular role that their families play, and the influences of societal constraints on their individual abilities vary significantly. In addition, the absence of particular themes in one research context compared to the importance they were given in the other, show some important differences which could be related to more general local or national levels.

One issue which distinguished the experiences of migrant youth from those of non-migrant youth was the issue of language. Due to the larger number of recently arrived and non-Spanish speaking students in Madrid, this played a more significant role in the Spanish data. After having seen the major focus these students put on language in Madrid, the relatively little attention given to language in Birmingham, however, gained importance. In spite of its proportional insignificance it showed that there were, in fact, a lot of parallels between recently arrived migrants in Madrid and Birmingham based on language. In both contexts, migrants who had come without prior knowledge of the Spanish or English language thus formed an important subgroup and as shown in the thesis, this sub-group had some rather different experiences than other students, most significantly in terms of interaction with peers and social inclusion. Their accounts furthermore showed that having friends in school improved their general well-being and feelings towards being in England or Spain and thus illustrate that improved language skills are important at several levels.

Another issue, which distinguished the narratives of the migrant groups in Spain from those of the other groups in the study, was the extent to which they brought up influences, external to them, as a determining influence on their future lives. The young migrants' talk about the future was characterised by a degree of uncertainty and for some of them this was related to their legal situation, reflecting Spain's particular migration policy. In addition, their parents often had a rather decisive influence over the time and conditions of their migration. This points to the importance of considering critically the concepts of voluntary and involuntary migrants when referring to children and young people. As previously mentioned, it also illustrates that approaches focusing only on young migrants' own aspirations or ideas about schooling and careers may be limited. Whereas focus should be put on what young people *want* to do in their future it is equally important to consider what they, in fact, *can* do.

A third difference in the data between the young people in Birmingham and their peers in Madrid was the way they emphasised diversity within the school. On one level, the attention to diversity in Birmingham compared to a lack of the same in Madrid may reflect the relatively longer period that cultural diversity has been part of British schools, and the consequent part it plays in the conscience of young people in education. At another, it can be seen as a result of the multicultural policy adopted by Britain at national, local and school levels. Finally, it could be related to the specific school in Birmingham, which was very multi-ethnic and gave a lot of attention to the diverse backgrounds of its students.

In Britain and other European countries, recent debates have focused on the postulated divisive results of multicultural policies and increased attention has been put on issues of 'community cohesion' and 'national values' (Harrington 2008; Vertovec and Wessendorf 2009). The comparison between the two contexts of this research, however, suggests that migrant students and group interaction in general benefit when the school curriculum and

its activities include cultural issues more directly. As my data from Madrid shows, young people do construct differences between themselves even though they are not actively promoted, and learning about each other may, as suggested by the data from Birmingham, facilitate inter-ethnic interaction and understanding. Furthermore, based on the experiences of two boys of minority ethnic origin in Birmingham, multicultural schools and increased attention to ethnic diversity may make migrant and minority ethnic students feel more comfortable within the school context.

Finally, the comparison between Birmingham and Madrid has emphasised the different experiences of first and second/third generation migrants. The study has shown, that first generation migrant students (both with and without knowledge of the language of instruction) have quite different experiences than children who are either second or third generation in the country and encounter specific problems as a result of their migration. This can be in terms of adaptation to the country (legal status and lack of networks), adjustments to the school system (learning the dialect, getting to know the topics talked about), feelings of homesickness, and socio-emotional difficulties because of the breaking up of their family and networks. Furthermore, some of them may experience uncertainty in relation to their future status and parents play a particular role in relation to their ability to settle permanently in a country.

References to the migration generation of people are rather atypical in Britain, due to the dominant discourse which focuses on ethnic and racial minorities (Anders & Wadia 2007: 513; Strelitz 2004: 1-2). The lack of distinction between migrants and minority ethnic groups in Britain may, however, obscure important differences, such as the ones mentioned above. This study therefore supports the case for more research into the experiences of children and young people in Britain, not only based on their ethnic origin, but also on their specific migration history.

Along a similar line, it could be considered whether future research into the situation of migrants in Spain would benefit from exploring their experiences on the basis of ethnicity, rather than migration status and nationality alone. As discussed in the thesis, migration into Spain is still a relatively new phenomenon and therefore migrant groups are usually defined in terms of their nationality or migration status. Two of the young migrants in this study (from Columbia and the Dominican Republic), however, hinted to a nascent tendency to identify as 'Latino' rather than their respective nationalities, and it is not impossible that other similar identities are in the process of developing. As migration becomes institutionalised in the Spanish context, and migrants begin to constitute a more significant part of the school population, studies which think in terms of alternative categories or explore the ways in which young migrants themselves construct identities, therefore become increasingly relevant.

The flexibility of ethnographic research, combined with my inclusion of both migrant, minority ethnic and majority ethnic young people in this study, has enabled me to consider the way that the young people constructed group identities and allowed me to explore commonalities and differences both within and between these groups. Because of the relatively small and concentrated samples used in ethnographic research, it can be difficult to generalise such findings. Various comparative levels exist in parallel and it is hard to decide whether differences are the result of the country, the city, or even the school context. As this conclusion has shown, comparisons based on ethnographic research can, however, point to areas which are either common for the sites compared or conspicuously absent in one of them. In addition, ethnographic methods can explore the way in which research participants discuss common topics and reveal important differences, which would perhaps otherwise have remained obscure.

The commonalities and differences between the young people in this study have emphasised the importance of striking a balance between acknowledging the experiences and needs that young people of migrant or minority ethnic background have because of their ethnicity or migration status, and the ones they share with each other as young people. The study has shown that the perceptions and perspectives of young people do not always match those most commonly researched by educationalists. Listening to them can therefore provide both important theoretical insights and useful practical recommendations.

The main theoretical contribution of this study lies in its suggested extensions to the social capital theory and the way in which it relates to the lives of young people. In line with studies calling for more research into the way young people themselves create social capital (Morrow 1999:751; Weller 2010), the thesis has explored the importance of friends, peers, family, and other social relations to young people's schooling and future lives, and argued that the socio-emotional well-being, which these networks provide, should be considered as a resource in itself to be included in social capital theory.

As the analysis has shown, the young people in this study, however, had diverging conditions for accessing the 'resource of well-being'. The study therefore also supports a number of practical recommendations, aimed to improve the social environment of schools and young people's conditions for making friends:

1) In both contexts, the students described how friendships developed out of being in the same class, and in Birmingham, several of the young people explained that inter-ethnic interaction had improved significantly over the years. *To facilitate social interaction, schools and policy makers are recommended to develop alternatives to the existing policies of setting and repetition, and in this way enable young people to interact in smaller and more consistent groups.*

2) By the boys, sports (and particularly football) was often described as a way to make friends and interact with boys from other ethnic backgrounds. The girls did, however, not seem to have a similar activity to meet around. *Schools are recommended to consider how to develop extra-curricular and break-time activities for both boys and girls that can improve inter-ethnic interaction and enhance the development of friendships.*

3) Some of the students, who had come to the schools in later years, had made friends through a 'buddy-system' or because they had been deliberately matched with another student by the school staff. *To help recently arrived students make friends, schools are recommended to continue or develop the practice of 'matching' recently arrived students with others who have been at the school longer.*

5) For migrant students who had come to England or Spain without knowing English or Spanish, limited language skills were described as the most significant barrier to social inclusion. *Schools are therefore recommended to continue (Spain) and increase (England) intensive language teaching for newly arrived students.*

6) Some of the other migrant students did, however, also experience significant socio-emotional difficulties related to the experience of migration and of being separated from their existing networks. *Schools are recommended to tackle these socio-emotional issues by increasing initial support for all migrant groups, also those who already know the language.*

7) The narratives of the young people in Birmingham showed that learning about other students' cultures and backgrounds in school is likely to lead to increased inter-cultural understanding and may also facilitate inter-ethnic friendships. *Schools are therefore recommended to increase (Spain) and sustain (England) attention to cultural diversity as a general school policy and in all classes.*

8) Finally, the study has shown that comparative research which uses ethnographic methods has significant potential for exploring the social life of migrants and minority ethnic youth in schools and for developing recommendations based on their experiences and perspectives. However, to explore more thoroughly how the recommendations above could be implemented and perhaps extended and applied in other countries, more research is needed. *This study therefore supports the case for developing more cross-national and comparative ethnographic research, which explicitly looks at the social life of schools and the specific situation of different migrant and minority ethnic groups within them.*

The practical recommendations derived from this study are all aimed to improve the general social environment of schools, but are also more specifically directed at the increased inclusion of different groups of migrant or minority ethnic young people. In this way, they reflect the central argument of the thesis; that it is important to consider the needs and experiences that young people have because of their ethnic or migration status, but also at the same time to keep in mind the ones they have because they are ‘just young’.

Endnotes

ⁱ Me levanto, no quiero ir al colegio...(laughing)... es que quiero dormir, estoy cansada siempre, no quiero ir al colegio. Ya, pero tengo que ir. Me levanto y me voy al colegio. La primera hora siempre esta aburrida, no puedo sentar, quiero dormir, Pero otras horas, ya, van muy rápido.

ⁱⁱ Los días más pesados, son los miércoles, porque tiene las clases más fuertes, y depende de los profesores, a veces te da mucho tema, y te estresa, depende del profesor.

ⁱⁱⁱ un día normal. A veces es aburrido, pero a veces divertido. Porque como estas con la materia que no nos gusta a veces aburrirnos... pero materia como.... Cuando participamos y eso, ahí sí, divertimos un poco.

^{iv} lunes, no me gusta porque tengo matemática el día entero. Me gusta la profe Carmen, me gusta las clases con ella.

^v Clara: ¿Como es un día normal?

Rafiq: Un día bueno, me gusta, me gustan los profesores y los compañeros del aula. Los profesores dicen cosas buenas para aprender y no insultan.

^{vi} Clara; puedes contarme un poco sobre como es un día normal aquí en el colegio?

Álvaro: bien, yo tengo amigos aquí,

^{vii} Neculai: el colegio me gusta mucho, los niños, tengo muchos amigos, los profesores son mejores que en Rumania. Los profesores me explican mejor, nosotros enteramos

^{viii} Iulian: un día normal. Es que, a mi este ..no es que no me gusto, pero no es como en Rumania que los chicos estaban más juntos. Hablaban todos entre, no como aquí, como cinco allí, dos allí, cada una con su... Y aquí tampoco las chicas, no las veo como en Rumania. No están con los chicos. Habían muchos chicas, que no tienen que estar novios para que pueden estar juntos. Yo tenía muchas amigas y todos, y vamos acompañados a la casa y eso no significaba que estamos novios. Y en el recreo estaban bromeando, jugando.

^{ix} un día normal, vuelvo a las 8.30, entro en clase, depende que me toca, normalmente es matemática o lengua. Y hablo con mis compañeros, y por ejemplo a Rafiq y ... siempre estoy diciendo algo en sus idiomas, el marroquí, el árabe, que me encanta, y a Neculai estoy hablando en rumano, y a los otros estoy hablando unos veces en ingles, otros en .. unos veces y otros solo estoy hablando en español

^x Natalia: pues, que por ejemplo, te levantas por la mañana y dices '¡Jo! ir al instituto', como tienes clases con tus compañeros, pues, te pasa más rápido. Te entretienen más. No es que estas hablando con ellos en clase, pero

Sofía: luego, siempre te ayudan, nos ayudamos entre nosotros, si pasa algo, yo sé esto, pues yo no, pues nos ayudamos.

Natalia: Siempre hay buen rollo entre nosotros.

^{xi} Alejandro: alumnos, pues en que te ayudan mucho, depende, cuando un profesor que no entiendes mucho, a veces hay alumnos que entienden y te ayudan mucho. A veces en el recreo también, te ayudan, y se influya mucho

^{xii} Mis compañeros, en clase, tengo tres compañeros que puedo preguntar cómo se hace esto, que no entiendo esto, que no entiendo esto. Con otros no hablo, porque no hablan conmigo, y no me dicen nada y yo no digo y así. Pero hay algunos, cuatro, tres, que me ayudan siempre.

^{xiii} Celia: ...para bien y para mal también, distraiendo

Clara: y tus amigos, ayudan o distraen?

Celia: por el momento distraen (with a smile) no, pero también me ayudan estudiar, por ejemplo cosas que no entiendo, llevo a una amiga toda la literatura a su casa estudiarla. Una tarde entera.

^{xiv} pues, si no tuvieras amigos en la clase, pues a lo mejor estuvieras más pendiente. Pero que tienes más amigos, pues, hablas con ellos, están menos pendiente, influyen no que es mal,

^{xv} sí hay una diferencia, porque amigos por ejemplo, Javier, yo, Manuel and Miguel somos amigos. Y con los compañeros hablan y todo, pero no tiene amistad. Solo es hablar, hola que tal, si hay diferencia.

^{xvi} pues, amigos es la gente con la tu quieres relacionarte y compañeros son la con que tienes que relacionarte....Mis compañeros son los que sientan en el aula y mis amigos pueden estar en otra clase,

^{xvii} Ricardo: si, me llevo bien con cualquiera. Siempre... pero me llevo bien con cualquiera nacionalidad

Manuel: no somos racistas..

Clara: y sus amigos, la mayoría son españoles o extranjeros,

Ricardo: si, la mayoría

Manuel: pero me llevo bien con los extranjeros por la calle

Ricardo: pero la mayoría son españoles

^{xviii} siempre están los extranjeros con los extranjeros y los de aquí con los de aquí

^{xix} Clara: y como veis la interacción entre todos, porque son de muchos diferentes lugares?

Natalia: ¿los extranjeros y nosotros? Buena, yo la veo bastante buena.

Sofía: yo la veo bien

Natalia: si aquí tampoco son, porque sea de otro país no te hablo. Que por ejemplo, hay gente que dice este de otro país, pues ya no habla contigo, porque, o por cosas que pasan en la vida, pero sí, yo creo que todo el mundo...no todos somos iguales, a lo mejor hay personas de España y gente de otros países que no se entienden y se llevan fatal.

Sofía: pero la mayoría no

Natalia: por lo menos en este edificio,

Sofía: Yo no les digo no me hables o...

Natalia: yo hablo con gente de otros países, y no pasa nada

Sofía: Eres un compañero mas, que si hablamos por eso pues podemos ser mas amigos, pero si no hablamos, vale, pero no por eso le niego la palabra

Natalia: a lo mejor no tienes la relación que tienes a lo mejor con otros compañeros, pero porque ellos también se hacen una vez grupos más con los de estos países que con de nuestro. Pero es normal, yo veo todo el mundo lo hacen.

Natalia: Pero porque tú tienes tus amigos, y ellos tienen los suyos, prefieren estar con los suyos, pero no por...

Sofía: no por otra cosa

^{xx} Clara: como fueron las primeras semanas?

Jorge: yo, fatal, que no entendía las clases, pero hay la verdad, que son los amigos, como le digo, apenas llegue, pues me vieron todo aquí, me conocieron y eso, y nada yo apenas llegue, pues ya tenía amigos. O sea, discriminación ninguna, o sea, a ti te ven, y un amigo mas. Si, ningún problema, yo la pase bien.

César: yo igual, cuando llegue aquí, los primeros días, igual. Me recuerdo que la primera clase fue educación física, y me llevaban a clase y no había nadie, que estaban todos aquí en el patio, y llegue, y algunos que se cercaron, preguntaban cómo me llamaba, de donde era, y así empecé todo, empecé a ir a clases y todo. Yo paso bien, solo los primeros días, la primera semana, ya la segunda semana, ya tenía amigos, te lleva a casa de ellos o los invitaba a tu casa, algunos... con unos que son de la tierra de donde soy, me llevo muy bien, siempre con sus padres, igual, me conocen a veces, cuando salen llevan a mi también con ellos

^{xxi} Alejandro: del míos de todos los países: paraguayos, ecuatorianos, dominicanos, todos los países de mi barrio

^{xxii} Alejandro: Si, hay una muy buena relación, porque aquí hay muchos latinos, también hay personas asiáticas,

Ana: africanos

Alejandro: africanas. Tenemos una reunión casi siempre, y nos gusta charlar con todos, no hay problemas.

Clara: y tu, ¿qué piensas?

Ana: yo, bien, pero igual que aquí en España siempre te vas llevando mejor con la gente que mas... Y en el recreo no es que tú te vayas, tú eres de Ecuador, y no es que te vayas con todos. Más bien con la gente latina. No es que todos son mezclados, no. Cada grupo tiene su sitio.

Clara: ¿Y porque es esto, piensas tu?

Ana: yo pienso que, no sé, porque yo ejemplo, yo no puedo hablarles de cosas como con otra persona..cosas que nunca voy a hablar, cosas que no van a entender

Alejandro: son conceptos muy diferentes

Ana: claro

Alejandro: que tú puedes hablar con un otro persona de otro país, y otra persona latina y te van a entender bien, de lo que estás hablando.

Ana: Solo quiero decir que no es que te llesves mal tampoco, pero es así

^{xxiii} Nadia: No, cuando les veo en la calle, les digo “hola, que tal”, pero no.

Clara: ¿te gustaría?

Nadia: No, tienen manera de hablar diferente, hacen cosas diferente, hay cosas que hacen que no me gustan, así. Ya no quiero salir. Más me gusta con ... ucranianos, me siento más cómodo.

Clara: Y que son las diferencias más grandes entre españoles y ucranias?

Nadia: La primera es lengua, me parece que cuando yo entendería, me parece que me gustaría más, pero como no entiendo, sabes, como no entiendo cosas, y si ríen, y yo me siento así, y no sé de que se hablan, de que se ríen.

^{xxiv} Iulian: pues, casi nadie hago, porque no tengo amigos... y eso, y estoy en casa con mis hámsteres.

^{xxv} si, porque fuera de casa a la calle solo yo una persona, no tiene personas y yo juntos, no quiero, solo en casa,

^{xxvi} Nadia: No decía ninguno palabra, porque no sabía, solo “Hola”, “¿Qué tal?”. Me preguntaba de dónde eres, así estaba callada... pero poco tiempo pasa y ya.

^{xxvii} Omar: me recuerdo, como yo no sabía nada. Yo estaba.... mis compañeros me habla y no sé cómo me contesto.

^{xxviii} Clara: ¿Y cuantas clases tienes con el Aula de Enlace, y cuantas con el otro grupo?

Mingxia: Música y Educación Física. Educación Visual y Plástica, no, porque no quiero ir allá, porque allá en las clase hay muchos alumnos y todos hablan español muy bien muy bien, y yo no entiendo nada. Ellos no con yo hablan. Yo no quiero ir. Solo quiero Aula de Enlace.

Pero allí, yo voy allí, ellos no conmigo habla, pero con otro, sus amigos habla. Yo solo mismo. Yo hablo nada. Pero aquí yo hablo poco, pero en China, yo sé China yo hablo mucho mucho, Yo en China habla muchísimo. Mis compañeros me dice charlante (laughing) En China tengo muchos amigos y amigas.

^{xxix}

Yazmin: no se, ella es rumana, me cayó bien, ella no sabía mucho español, yo le conocí aquí en el instituto. Un amigo me presento y no sé, pero, no sabía mucho español, y poquito a poco cuando se iba conmigo ha aprendido muchísimo. Y me callo muy bien

^{xxx} Para mi sí, porque soy mayor, mi hermana pequeña ya sabe más que yo, porque tiene más amigos, tiene, así habla, y habla mejor que yo. Para mi, si es mas difícil.

^{xxxi} Alina: porque, no sé, unos españoles, no les gustan a los extranjeros, y dicen cómo es que tú no sabes hablar, no sé qué, y por eso, o te dice es que tú no eres de la gente. A mí me ha pasado muchas veces, por ejemplo en mi portal, me ha dicho una señora: ‘es que tu vienes de la extranjera tú no tienes

derecho hacer nada'. Y yo pregunta 'y porque?'. Y me dicho 'es que tú no eres española', y yo 'y tampoco quiero ser española'. Y te lo juro, que venía a mi puerta, y me grito 'rumanita de mierda'.

xxxii Yazmin; pues, la relación está bien, yo no veo que critican alguien, a mi a menos no me critican, hombre, yo creo habrá un racista. O sea, habrá algunos por aquí que sean racistas pero, no siempre Clara: ¿en qué manera ellos son racistas? Que hacen Yazmin; bueno, por ejemplo a veces hay un ecuatoriano, el puto ecuatoriano, ecuatoriano de mierda, dice, al ecuatoriano le joden muchísimo, me entiendes?

xxxiii Diogo:... algunos no respetan nada. Yo respeto porque quiero que me respetan, no. Pero hay algunos, por ejemplo Omar de mi clase porque es negro dice que es un ladrón, no sé qué... Yo no veo porque, solo porque es negro.

xxxiv Iulian: Es que juegan contigo y eso, pero cuando llega el tiempo que discutes a algo, siempre te insultan, rumano, bueno yo no entro en conflictos, pero ellos son.. además, es que son de África, no sé cómo suportan.

Clara: que pasa?

Iulian: es que siempre, negro, Omar, ya sabes quién es, es de África, y es que siempre hay muchos chicos que le dicen, hay chicos que piensan que tu viniste en este barco

Clara: ah... las pateras,

Iulian: si, o que tu eres negro de África...

xxxv Clara: ok, bueno, que piensas del ambiente en el colegio, como es, como son las relaciones entre los alumnos?

Omar: otros bien, otros no, no hay palabras entre nosotros. Pero otros si hay bien entre nosotros.

Jugamos futbol, conocimos, y otros cuanto salimos. Pero otros no hay ningún contacto entre nosotros.

...

Omar: los españoles, yo no tengo ningún problema con ellos. Solo jugamos futbol, cuando terminamos. Pero en la calle, no vemos. Ahora, no tengo amigos españoles.

Clara: de donde son tus amigos

xxxvi César: te llevan muy bien con todos, con la mayoría te llevan bien.

Jorge: casi todos te conocen

César: casi todos te conocen

Clara: Y como son las relaciones aquí en el colegio?

César: yo, muy bien,

Jorge: yo con todo el mundo

César: con todo el mundo, casi, muy bien

Clara: porque aquí en el colegio hay alumnos de muchos países, como ven la interaccion entre ellos?

Jorge: con nosotros no se afecte nada, o sea, sea lo que sea,

César: es igual

Jorge: igual

César: yo me llevo bien con todos

xxxvii Manuel: Mira, en la segunda de ESO vino un profesor de naturales, y en clase nos aprobado por nada, no estudiamos, y los exámenes sacamos unos libros y copiamos, y le han echando del instituto.

Ricardo: no tenía autoridad. Y luego hay profesores muy serios, que entonces dice yo estoy serio y hay que estudiar para que no te derangan. Pero luego hay profesores que no te derangan y tu dice si no me derangan, pues hago lo que quiero. Es lo que pasa, distintas formas de profesores.

Clara: pero cuales son las características que son importantes en un profesor?

Ricardo; que tenga autoridad, y luego que explica bien. Si no tiene autoridad, no sirve para nada.

xxxviii Alejandro: A veces profesores, digamos, tiene paciencia, y más divertidas en las clases, más animado, como te sientes mas de gusto. Es mucho más divertido y más aprendes.

Ana: Estela

Alejandro: Claro, como la profesora Estela, da las clases un poco más animada y a veces tiene un carácter, pero aprende mas con ella. En cambio con la profesora de matemática, da también clases divertidas, pero a veces es un poco más pesado. Depende del profe, como la de , si da más animado, mas te gusta y mas te animo. Si solo te pone escribe esto, te sientes pesado y no te, no entiendes

mucho cosas

xxxix

Sofía: Hay unas que como vayas a trompicones, que vayas más lento, se pasa por ti bueno ya coges el ritmo como coges, y si no, ya, bueno. Te intentan ayudar un poco más para que te lo saces. Para que todo no depende de ti, sino también de ellos

Natalia: Hombre, todos saben ayudarte, pero unos más que otros. A lo mejor tu relacionas mejor con algunos profesores que otros están influyendo en la materia deseando. Si hay un profesor que no te caiga muy bien pues la materia .. solo piensas que esta asignatura esta mala. A lo mejor con un profesor que te caiga mejor, pues, te caigas mejor, al tener más relación con él. te ayudan mas en las cosas

^{xi} Clara: ¿Que es un buen profesor para ti?

César: Que respetan a los alumnos. Que les ayudan, a veces te dan consejo, cuando haces algo malo. Todo esto.

Jorge: que más que un profesor sea como un amigo,

^{xli} Nadia: hay profesores, que son más buenos que otros, hay profesores que me gustan más que otros. Que explican más que entiendo yo, Hay profesores que explican así da da da da da da... van muy rápido, van muy rápido y no comprendo muchas cosas. Tengo que buscar en diccionario, tengo que preguntar a otros profesores, a los compañeros... Por ejemplo, Estela, que está en el otro lado, que habla muy rápido, muy rápido, que entiendo casi nada, pero después de la hora pregunto y me dice esto así esto así. Está bien.

^{xlii} Alina: aquí por me gusta por ejemplo la profe Anabel y Constanza, me encantan porque siempre te escuchas, y si no sabes, te lo vuelvan a repetir, te lo vuelvan a repetir hasta que entiendas. Pero en mi país, dice que si no entiendas, ya esta, le dan igual. Eso es lo que me gusta aquí, los profesores.

^{xliii} Iulian: Es que la profe Anabel, te entiende, los problemas los sabes solucionar, y es que no se, casi psicológica ella, sabe no se, sabe hablar contigo, sabe de qué manera cogerte y explicarte y todo esto.

^{xliv} muy diferente el estudio. Depende, a veces daban aquí mucha materia, mucho más materia, mucho más avanzado. La diferencia es que allá, estudias con la pizarra, después te pone las notas, aquí estudias con los libros, y ya..., entonces tienes que saber manejar a los libros, y que no sabes manejar, te editas mucho, también el profesorado, es muy diferencia que allá, a veces cuánto cuesta a uno, te ayudabas un poco más. ... Al principio te sientes como en otro mundo, sientes muy raro, no entiendes bien las clases, hasta que pasa unos semanas y ya los has viendo como van las clases. Primero día es muy desconcertado, mandan cosas que tu ni sabes, te pregunta y te explican, es muy extraño las clases.

^{xlv} Jorge: es mucho más difícil con nosotros, que ... desde este país del otro, y con el acento y eso, al principio es una problema, pero luego te acostumbras y ahora es mucho mejor la enseñanza aquí.

...

César: aquí la primera vez que recibí sociales, lo peor,

Clara: a si?

César: si, porque no sabía nada de aquí. Todos preguntaban solo cosas de aquí, los ríos, de aquí, todo las ciudades. Y conocí solamente a Barcelona y Madrid, las ciudades más grandes, es lo único que sabía. No conocía Valencia. Pero no sabía, cuando llegue aquí empecé a estudiar un poco, casi también solo de Europa. Y cuando estas allá, casi solo de América, es diferente.

^{xlvi} C; y antes de llegar a España, estuviste a un colegio en Guinea.

Omar: si, estuve en un colegio allí

C; y como fue en relación con este colegio?

Omar: bien, pero tenemos clases pero no otros no tiene profesores

C; y cuantos alumnos hay allí

Omar: hay 200

C; y como fue el nivel, mas difícil o más fácil

Omar: distinto, aquí más o menos, aquí fácil que en mi país, porque aquí tenemos profesores suficientes.

^{xlvi} Ella tiene amigos, españoles, que ya lo conozco, que siempre está con ella en recreo, porque estos amigos, compañeras que tengo en mi clase siempre van a su lado, no sé donde van, no quiero ir con ellos, me voy con mi hermana. Y ella sabe más, para ella es más fácil.

^{xlvi} mi mama se va a las 9 de la mañana y vuelve a las 10 de la noche. Y entonces ¿quién me va a ayudar?

^{xlvi} Ricardo; es que en mi casa, mis padres no han estudiado, no saben muchas cosas, claro. A multiplicar y eso. Cuando era pequeño si me enseñaba pero las cosas que estamos aprendiendo ahora no saben.

^l Clara: ¿y tienes ayuda, tu familia te puede ayudar?

Celia: es que, no porque yo tengo más nivel que ellos, entonces, hombre, si tengo que entregar un trabajo, mi madre me ayuda buscar información, cosas así, si tengo que pasar una prueba me revisa..

^{li} Sofía: aquí en Madrid tengo que pedir de mi tío, porque no tengo otra persona, pero sé que mi tío me va a ayudar, todo lo que él pueda. Claro, pero vamos. El siempre me ha dicho, tu si necesitas ayuda yo este por aquí para ayudarte. Siempre allí.

Natalia: en mi caso la pide más de mi hermana, porque como yo estudia, bueno lo mismo no, pero por ejemplo ella se bachillere por las letras, el hebreo y el latina. Pues, por la matemática mi hermana no entenderá cero, pero por lo menos si necesito ayuda se lo pide de mi hermana, porque mi madre no tiene ni idea de latín, y nada.

^{lii} Sofía: Pero yo luego quiero sacar mi bachillerato para poder hacer un curso para que pueda trabajar. Yo quiero trabajar en un jardín de infantiles, vale. Pues, si no tengo el bachillerato, no puedo hacer lo que yo quiero.

Natalia: yo por ejemplo, quiero estudiar mi bachillerato, yo al terminar la ESO yo estudie bachillere, porque si estudie bachillere puedo estudiar estética, que es lo que yo quiero, estética o imagen personal.

^{liii} Jorge: No se, quiero ir a bachillerato y después a la universidad y algo de informática. Algo así.

César: Yo, igual. Yo estoy casi lo mismo, por la informática, después el bachillerato, o si no un grado medio, un grado superior de informática, o la terminando cuarto, tal vez, no sé.

Clara: ¿Y de que depende si vas a hacer el bachillerato o el grado medio?

César: es casi igual, porque después de hacer un grado superior de informática puedo volver, puedo hacer un bachillerato si quiere. No se yo para empezar a trabajar, teniendo ya carrera superior, ya puedo empezar a trabajar, mientras estudio por la noche, no se

Jorge: Si, algo así,

César: pero más o menos se va saliendo como quieres.

^{liv} Nadia: Si, quiero hacer algo de grado medio, de sanidad, me voy a sanidad, me voy a farmacia, y no sé, tengo muchos papeles de esto, después de grado medio me voy a grado superior, de cómo se llama, de profesión dentales, me gusta esto..

Clara: A, ¿para ser dentista?

Nadia: Si, hay perspectivas como aquí en España, o si me voy a Ucrania por ejemplo hay perspectivas de esto.

^{lv} todavía no sé, yo quiero mucho, enfermera, profesor. Y jefa de cafetería,

^{lvi} Clara: que quieres hacer en el futuro

Alina: pues, azafata, o mira, yo por ejemplo patino muy bien, patino 12 años, yo patino casi hace que me voy. Y he ganado unos cuantos premios y trofeos en mi país para patinar. Se hacía mucho concursos de eso en mi ciudad, y en mi ciudad he ganado más de cuatro veces... y también de natación... Y pues, ya está, no sé qué voy a hacer... o algo de idiomas, he visto aquí en España que también se dan clases para enseñar a los niños chiquititos a patinar, sabes. Y he dicho que por la mañana puedo por ejemplo hacer algo de clases para ser azafata o algo así, después por la tarde

ayudarlos a los pequeños a aprender a patinar..... O también me gustaría cuidar a los chicos infantiles, los chiquitos. A Yazmin también le encanta y a Sascha, vamos a hacer las tres iguales.

^{lvii} César: No se, en diez años, no sé, si es que sigo aquí, pues a ver, pues no, porque ir a Ecuador y volver a Ecuador pero así un tiempo, hasta que tengo la nacionalidad, quien sabe, no sé. No tengo claro, porque mi madre quiere volver y todo esto.

...

Jorge: Eso es lo que pasa con los míos.

C; ¿tus padres también quieren volver?

Jorge: Mi madre, mi padre quiere estar aquí.

César: mi madre también quiere volverse para allá, como que no se siente bien aquí.

.....

Jorge: es que aquí, uno casi solo tiene tiempo para trabajar, ir a casa, cenar, viene los fines de semana, uno no puede salir por ningún lado, porque, mas descansa

César: necesita descansa

Jorge: Porque trabaja muy duro. Mis dos padres trabajan muy duro, que llegan muy cansados. Y es casi todo el día.

César: allá con que tengas un negocio y te pasas bien.

Jorge: mucho más suave

César: Más suave, ella con la familia, y conoce todos.

Jorge: ya, la calidad de vida.

^{lviii} Alejandro: mis padres han planeado entre dos años regresar, porque aquí la economía es un poco difícil. Entonces, pronto ahorrar y regresar a mi país. Pero ya cuando estudio, y hacer la profesión que ya he hecho y practicarla.

^{lix} “no, es que mi madre quiere que me vuelva, pero si vuelva no puede ahorrar dinero. Es que yo cuesto mucho. Es que tiene que comprar comida, etc”

^{lx} Iulian: hay una problema, que es esta no lo sé, mi madre quiere ir a Italia para vivir. Porque allí esta su hermana, mi primo, que viví con él, que es más que un hermano, desde pequeño viví con el. Bueno aquí ahora no tiene mucho trabajo, bueno tiene un trabajo pero está sustituyendo otra chica.

...

Clara:¿y a ti también te gusta ir a Italia?

Iulian: phhu, claro. Porque allí esta mi familia un poquito más lejana, pero están mis primos, los primos de mi madre, la hermana de mi madre, mis tíos, los primos de mi madre. Allí hay muchos los que conozco. Y en todo España no hay nadie de mi familia.

^{lxi} Clara: ¿donde piensas que vas a estar en 5-10 años? ¿Vas a estar aquí?

Mingxiau: no se, todavía no se

Clara: y tus padres, ¿quieren quedar en España?

Mingxiau: mi madre si, pero mi padre, como quiere mi madre. Mi padre nada, voy aquí voy allá, nada.

Clara: y tu madre?

Mingxiau: pero mi madre, solo quiere Madrid, porque mis tías y tíos todos aquí. Mi tío, mi abuela, madre de su madre también está aquí. Todos en Madrid. Pero mi padre, su primo en Barcelona.

Clara: entonces, hay familia en Barcelona y Madrid.

Mingxiau: sí, y en Italia, otro país, mi madre quiere en Madrid, pero mi padre nada, como que mi madre quiere.

Clara: y tú? Solamente quieres quedarte en Madrid o no te importa?

Mingxiau: Todavía si, porque no se español, no quiero voy nada, solo quiero voy a China, pero esto junio, ahora no, porque que estudiar español, pero otro viene año, junio y julio yo voy a China.

^{lxii} Si me deja mi padre regresar a España, regresar a España y empezar a nuevo curso, tercero, y no sé.

^{lxiii} Marcial: yo por primero no quería ir por acá. Después cuando vine aquí me acostumbro.

Clara: y porque no querías venir?

Marcial: porque estaba mi abuelo solo porque mi abuela se había muerto.

Clara:¿entonces viviste con tu abuelo allí?

Marcial: si

Clara: cuando viniste, ¿que pensé?

Marcial: primero fui a un locutorio y llame para ver como este mi abuelo. Y estaba muy triste. Después ya me dijo de que cuando me salga los papeles que vaya. Me tuvo que acostumbrar un poco, al otro mes me dijo que me van a apuntar en un colegio.

...

Marcial: bueno, me gusta más, pero me da pena mi abuelo, pero me gusta mas a Espana, porque aquí también tengo mi mama y mi papa, y mi hermano

^{lxiv} Alina: por ejemplo, no tienes que estudiar tanto para llegar algo... arriba, sabes, porque en mi país estudias muchísimo muchísimo muchísimo, sabes. Y por eso, y ya lo sé, que aquí tiene un futuro mucho mas bueno que en mi país. Por eso he venido

^{lxvi} Clara: y como fue venir a España?

César: Para mi bien, porque estaba aquí con mi madre que no veía cinco años.

....

Clara: ¿Y tú?

Jorge: ehh, bueno, mira vine por aca.... Ya mi padre no lo veía unos 7 años, y mi madre 5. Pues, poco a poco fueron llevando a mis hermanos, y, nada, llego hasta tuvo que quedarme solo con mis tías y eso, fue muy Y vine acá,

^{lxviii} Diogo: regresar. Aquí son mis amigos, pero no son mis amigos. Pero los de mi país, cuando quieren ser amigos, son ...

Clara: y que te gusta mas España o Brasil?

Diogo: hombre...

Clara: hombre

Diogo: mi país

Clara: y cuáles son las cosas en tu país que te gusta?

Diogo: las personas,

Clara: son muy diferentes de los personas aquí?

Diogo: si. Eh, el futbol, los sitios. Creo que solo eso.

^{lxix} “Que me siempre está ayudando, que no me salgan cosas que me siempre ayuda, y me dice como tengo que decir esto, como tengo que hacer esto, me siempre dice bien y así”

^{lxx} Mario: Pues, aconsejándote y eso

Luisa: que sigamos algo porque es por nuestro bien,

Clara: y que dicen sobre vuestros planes?

Luisa: que yo soy libre para escoger lo que quiero.

Mario; hm mm, que sigue estudiando. Porque si no terminare en un trabajo que no me gusta y eso,

^{lxxi} César: me apoya y todo, me dice lo que tengo que hacer, me paga todo lo que yo quiero para que pueda estudiar. Y todo eso, ya me apoye mucho para que pueda estudiar, sigue estudiar. Nada mas Clara: y tus padres?

Jorge: Pues, ellos me aconsejan, me ayudan, me dicen las cosas que tengo que hacer, las cosas que no. Me dice lo que puedo hacer, y me dice lo que quiero hacer que lo haga, y me apoyen en todo, o sea, con lo que tengan que darme.

Clara:¿y tu hermano?

Jorge: mi hermano, igual, me ayuda en lo que puede, siempre me dice que si, y en parte también my hermana, en lo que pueden me ayudan, me aconsejan, me dice lo que debo que hacer

Clara: Y tíos, ...

Jorge: lo mismo,

César: lo mismo, te apoyan, te ayudan, también, casi como un madre o padre, te ayudan cuando necesitas algo.

Clara: y sus tías y familiares están aquí o en Ecuador?

César: yo, si, yo, algunos tíos, solo tengo una tía aquí, algunos primos y todo eso. Ya, mis abuelos y todos están allá.

Jorge: yo pase casi toda mi infancia con ellos, o sea

César: yo con mis abuelos pase hasta que me vine

Jorge: casi no hay una diferencia para mí, de mis padres.

^{lxxii} Diogo: me apoyan y cuando hago unas cosas malas, me apoyan pero... me apoyan para mejorar. No, me apoyan cuando yo necesito algo, cuando yo estoy triste o no sé, me apoyan, me alegren, y cuando yo hago una cosa mala siempre están allí para que haga las cosas buenas.

^{lxxiii} Natalia: familia, pero dentro de mi familia la que más me ayuda es mi hermana, mi madre me ayuda mucho, pero tengo, no sé, mi hermana ya tiene más experiencia, sabes, me ayuda mas, se preocupa más... Quizás porque está haciendo una carrera se preocupa más. Mi madre preocupa también, pero mi hermana siempre está encima de mí, porque ya lo conoce, mas apoyo también.

....

Sofía: no tengo. Pero me ayuda mi madre. Hombre, ya no me va a ayudarme mi abuela que no tiene los estudios.

Natalia: claro, hombre, mi madre no tiene estudios, pero a lo mejor, mi madre me aconseja, pero mi hermana tiene más experiencia

Sofía: mi tía y mi madre siempre están diciendo: no vas a estar como yo, terminando como yo, que mira como trabajo, no me gusta pero como no hay otra cosa, pues, tu estudias y tal

^{lxxiv} Araceli: no hay nadie como tu familia. Tú puedes tener una amigo muy cercano, una amiga, un profesor, pero no ayudan como ellos.

^{lxxv} Javier: los amigos te dan consejos, y sobre lo que tú quieres hacer y eso

^{lxxvi} Sofía: los amigos, pues, igual que la familia, o una parte más hay que estén apoyando, venga si estudia o tal, porque si ya te dicen "no hagas nada", pues oye...

Natalia: Claro, hay algunos que siempre al lo mejor hay algunos que dejan estudiar y trabajan en cualquier cosa no se qué, que andan y trabajan. A lo mejor tu no dices igual que ellos. Hay otros que siempre dicen no seas tonta, estudia, que luego va a tu tienda de depilarme, no sé qué, que luego te llevan hijos. Siempre ayudan también a lo mejor para ti,

^{lxxvii} César: en que te ayudan, te dan consejos. Que tengas que estudiar algunas, para que sigues adelante. Tengas una carrera, un futuro, y todo eso. Te respetan y todo lo que puedan te ayudan, y eso, ellos son amigos muy bien, todos te ayudan.

Jorge: sí, todos,

^{lxxviii} pues, no sé, ... en el futuro no nos vamos a separar, y ella dice que algún día cuando estemos en el futuro, ella vendrá a Marruecos y yo a Rumania.

^{lxxix} Los profesores son ellos que están aquí ahora, me ayudan con mis estudios, después ellos que me van a ayudar en el futuro, con mi lengua, con aprender español, o aprender la profesión que elegí.

^{lxxx} pues, te dan opciones, hablan contigo los profesores. Dicen, tienen estas opciones, no sé qué, que quieres estudiarte, a lo mejor te dirijan un poco por donde tú quieras estudiar. A lo mejor yo quiero estudiar estética me están diciendo "Mira, te haces este trabajo para que tu sepas lo que quieres estudiar, lo que tiene este". Te ayudan a ver muchas cosas o te da mucha información. Está bien para vamos a ver lo qué quieres hacer, como lo quieres hacer.

^{lxxxi} tengo que esforzar mucho para aprender todo esto, que quiere aprender yo, la primera son lengua, la segunda mi profesión, que erigí, después que tengo que ir a trabajar.

^{lxxxii} sí, me parece, porque si se quiere, te vas a estudiar, te vas a trabajar, te vas a hacer algo para vivir, y si no quieres te vas a sentar en el metro y dice déjame 10 céntimos para comida, para todo esto, porque estoy enfermo, algunas veces es la verdad, que no tiene nadie aquí, no tiene casa, no tiene trabajo y tiene que pedir dinero para comer. Pero hay estos, hay otra gente que dicen "que me ayuda, que me ayuda" y después van a comprar cervezas, comprar bebida, compran porros, me parece que no está bien. Pero aquí en España hay muchas posibilidades para trabajar, para estudiar.

^{lxxxiii} Omar: si, todos no tienen la misma oportunidad. Otros es, tiene corazón por buscarse vida. Todo tiene su oportunidad pero no son mismo. Otros tiene corazón por buscar. Y otros no tiene corazón, dice no quiero trabajar, es muy duro, mira este, solo quiero tener trabajo.

Clara: pero que significa tener corazón

Omar: no sé como se dice en español, pero en francés dice 'courage'

Clara: pero me puedes explicar qué significa?

Omar: corazón, como otros dice este trabajo es duro. Otros no veo esto, solo quiere buscar salir de su situación. Quieren mejorar su situación

Clara: y ellos que no quieren, que hacen

Omar: solo otros que tiene familia rico, dice que no quiere este trabajo duro. Yo como no tengo familia rico y dice a mi yo tengo que hacer este para mejorar mi vida.

^{lxxxiv} algunos quieren y no pueden, algunos pueden y no quieren. Yo quiero!

^{lxxxv} yo creo que no, porque los que no estudian no tienen muchas oportunidades. Me ha dicho la profe que si no tiene la ESO completar, no pueden ni barrer el suelo.

^{lxxxvi} Mario: depende...

Luisa: los que tienen estudios tienen más posibilidades, que ellos que no tienen.

Clara: ¿y depende de que (a Mario)

Mario: de los estudios, y si son legales o no

^{lxxxvii} Clara: piensas que todas las personas tienen las mismas oportunidades en la sociedad española?

Iulian: no, en mi opinión no, es que, hay muchos extranjeros que no tienen los mismos derechos, es que como que pone al otro lado, aunque tu tiene la misma facultad de la universidad, te tratan en otra manera. No sé, pueden estar en un oficina igual que otros. Pero encuentran otros problemas. No, yo no creo.

^{lxxxviii} sí, yo creo que todas las personas tienen las mismas oportunidades. Pero tienen que comportarse bien, si viene de otros países. No tienen que hacer, que robar, tiene que respetar estar este país

^{lxxxix} Miguel: los empresarios por ejemplo, que tienen inmigrantes salen mucho más barato y hay otros que tienen españoles salen mucho más caro,

Araceli: porque, yo lo veo porque si tu es de una familia la que da igual, si estudias y trabajan, nunca vas a tener la oportunidad de ser abogado. Si todos nuestros familia nos apoyamos en todos tendremos las mismas oportunidades

^{xc} Ricardo: por la forma de ser de algunos grupos.

Manuel: la tema familiar también. Depende como se educan

Ricardo: porque no tiene la misma facilidad, un niño con familia y un niño que no tiene padres o su madre no tiene la...entonces, no hay las mismas oportunidades.

Clara: entonces, por la familia. Y tu dijiste algo sobre la forma de ser...

Ricardo; si porque como decir, hay familias, que está en la droga. O entonces los hijos no se educa.

^{xci} No, principalmente, como mujeres para que cobrar lo mismo tengan que estudiar el doble, y hoy en día, a la gente extranjera, se les contractan para labor puntuales, temporales y de muy bajo rango. Si tiene que tener una educación muy fuerte para que les trate igual como cualquier español con la ESO. Clara: Y piensas que esto va a cambiar en el futuro?

Celia: yo espero, pero que dejen a Zapatero un par de años mas y que dejen a ser cambio, pero no se. Es, tiene que cambiar la generación, porque esa generación han criado en una época, piensa así, pero, yo creo que va a cambiar en un par de años, o sea, unos cuantos años para cambiar eso.

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Appendix 1: Interview Guide

Introduction to the interview:

As you know, I am doing a research project at the school to find out how young people like you from different (ethnic/national) backgrounds experience going to school and how you see your future. So, I have prepared a number of questions, which I would like us to discuss. If there are any of these questions, that you do not wish to answer, you just tell me and we will change the subject.

But before we start there are some practical things that I would just like to go over with you.

Consent form: go over again

I would like to record the interview. Would that be ok with you?

Are there any questions before we begin?

Background questions:

1. Age:
2. Where were you born?
3. If not born in England/Spain – how long have you been here?
4. How long have you been at this school?
5. Who do you live with?
6. And what do they do?
7. If the family has recently arrived – what did they do before you came here?
8. And do you know their educational level?
9. Which language(s) do you speak at home?

Schooling experiences:

1. What is a normal day at school like?
2. Are there any days you like better than others? Why?
3. Which classes do you like the best/worst? Why?

For students in the bridging class in Madrid

4. How many hours do you have in the bridging class and how many with the regular class?

5. Which classes do you like the best?

For recently arrived migrants:

6. Do you remember the first day here at the school? How was it?

For all students:

7. Do you have experiences from other schools? How were they (differences/similarities)?

8. Post-it exercise: What are the things or who are the people that influence how you feel at school?

Discussion of the things brought up by the young people as part of this exercise

Future lives:

1. What are your plans for next year?

For migrant students in Madrid:

2. What are you going to do in your vacation?

3. And after the vacation?

4. Are you going to continue here at the school?

Questions for all students:

5. What would you like to do in the future?

6. Where do you see yourself in 5-10 years time?

7. Post-it exercise: Which people or what things do you think influence how you future will be?

Discussion of issues brought up by the students as part of this activity

Discussion question:

1. Do you think everyone has the same opportunities in the British/Spanish society?

Is there anything we haven't discussed, which you think is important?

Conclusion:

Again, thank you very much for participating in this interview.

Appendix 2: Information leaflet and consent form used in Birmingham

School experiences and life projects of young people in England and Spain

Information leaflet

My name is Clara, I am a PhD student from the University of Warwick, and I am doing a research project here at the school. The project is a comparative project and after carrying out my research with you, I will go to Spain to do a similar project in a Spanish secondary school.

My project looks at how you, as young people from different ethnic backgrounds, experience going to school, getting an education, and what hopes and wishes you have for the future. By comparing your views and perspectives with those of a multi-ethnic group of young people in Spain, I hope my research will bring new insights about issues facing different groups of young people in education across Europe.

The focus of the research is your year group - year 11. Therefore I have been participating in some of your classes. I am also carrying out a number of group discussions and individual interviews with those of you who have decided to participate in the project. I hope that you will share your experiences, perspectives and views with me.

The data I collect will form the basis for my PhD thesis and I hope to publish parts of it in articles or in book chapters. I also hope that I will have the opportunity to come back and tell you about my findings, before you leave school next summer. In any publications or presentations, all information will be kept anonymous and that means that your names and the name of the school will be changed. In addition, any factors clearly identifying you will be left out.

What you may tell me during the research will be kept confidential and information will not be passed on to either your parents or your teachers. One important exception is, if you tell me about something, which can lead to you or other people being harmed or put in danger. In that case, I will have to pass it on to relevant staff, but I will talk to you about it first.

Finally, all participation in the project is completely voluntary. If you agree to take part and later decide that you want to withdraw from the project you can do so at any time you may wish.

To confirm your participation in the project, I will need you to write your name on the following consent form and return it to me.

I would also be happy if you would show this information at home, and if you or your parents should have any questions, you are welcome to contact me by e-mail: c.h.r.joergensen@warwick.ac.uk.

Best wishes,
Clara Joergensen

School experiences and life projects of young people in England and Spain



CONSENT FORM

I have read the information leaflet and understand what the project is about.
I confirm that I wish to participate in the research project that Clara Joergensen is conducting at my school.

Date: _____

Name: _____

Appendix 3: Letter sent to the parents of the students in Madrid

	Consejería de Educación DIRECCIÓN DE ÁREA TERRITORIAL MADRID-CAPITAL Comunidad de Madrid	 <small>UNION EUROPEA Fondo Social Europeo</small>
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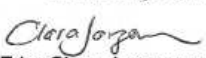
Estimadas familias:

Se está realizando una investigación en nuestro Instituto, en colaboración con la Universidad de Warwick (Inglaterra), por parte de Clara Joergensen, estudiante de doctorado. Es un proyecto etnográfico y comparativo en España e Inglaterra que explora cómo alumnos de varios orígenes ven su situación escolar y sus perspectivas futuras en ambos países. Investiga los factores que ellos consideran importantes tanto para su situación escolar presente como para las decisiones que les tocará tomar al terminar la educación obligatoria. Por este objetivo la investigadora va a participar en algunas de las clases de sus hijos del aula de enlace desde la fecha hasta final de curso.

Además, la investigación requiere la realización de entrevistas individuales o por parejas con sus hijos, que se realizarían en una hora de tutoría. El equipo de profesores y la investigadora colaboran mutuamente, de forma que ni la investigación, ni la observación, ni las entrevistas interfieren en las clases o el aprendizaje en ninguna manera. Al realizar este proyecto, se siguen los principios éticos de la Asociación de Antropólogos Sociales y de la Universidad de Warwick. Los nombres del instituto y de todas las personas que participen en el proyecto no figurarán en ninguno de los documentos.

Deseamos solicitarles su colaboración autorizando a sus hijos a realizar la entrevista con la investigadora. Por otra parte estamos a su disposición para cualquier consulta sobre esta asunto, tanto Clara Joergensen como yo misma.

Agradeciéndoles su atención y colaboración les envía un cordial saludo
Madrid a 2 de junio de 2008

La investigadora,

Fdo: Clara Joergensen
Universidad de Warwick

D/Dña _____ madre, padre, tutor/a legal del/a alumno/a
_____ del aula de enlace

☐ AUTORIZA ☐ NO AUTORIZA

a su hijo a participar en la investigación que está realizando en 2008 Clara Joergensen

En Madrid a _____ de junio de 2008

(Firma)

Appendix 4: The young people interviewed in Birmingham

Interview	Name	Origin	Gender
1	Fawzia	Black African	F
	Katie	White British	F
2	Vicky	Black Caribbean	F
	Melanie	White British	F
3	Jamila	Asian	F
4	Rajan	Asian	M
	Saleem		M
	Ashraf		M
5	Leyla	Black African (recently arrived -EAL)	F
6	Raveena	Asian	F
	Jennifer	White British	F
7	Benjamin	White British	M
	Rafee	Asian	M
8	Shawn	Mixed Heritage	M
	Jake	White British	M
9a and 9b	Najiib	Asian	M
	Aleem		M
10	Omar	Black African	M
	Daniel	White British	M
	Jake	White British	M
11	Hana	White Other (recently arrived from the Middle East -EAL)	F
12	Amina	Black African (recently arrived -EAL)	F
13	Vanida	Other ethnic group (Recently arrived from East Asia -EAL)	F
14	Marlon	Mixed Heritage	M
	Anesu	Black African	M
15	Shaneece	Black British	F
	Meadow	Black African (recently arrived)	F

Appendix 5: The young people interviewed in Madrid

Interview	Name	Origin	Gender
1	Nadia	Ukraine (recently arrived)	F
2	Natalia Sofia	Spanish	F F
3	Alejandro Ana	Colombia Dominican Republic	M F
4	Jorge Cesar	Ecuador (recently arrived) Ecuador (recently arrived)	M M
5	Celia	Spanish	F
6	Yazmin	Morocco	F
7	Luisa, Mario Yessenia	Ecuador Ecuador (recently arrived) Ecuador	F M F
8	Aracely, Javier Miguel	Spanish	F M M
9	Gloria	Nigeria (recently arrived)	F
10	Alina	Romania	F
11	Phoebe	Nigeria (recently arrived)	F
12	Mingxia	China	F
13	Diogo	Brazil	M
14	Manuel Ricardo	Spanish	M M
15	Iulian	Romania (recently arrived)	M
16	Marcial	Dominican Republic (recently arrived)	M
17	Álvaro	Dominican Republic (recently arrived)	M
18	Neculai	Romania (recently arrived)	M
19	Omar	Guinea (recently arrived)	M
20	Rafiq	Morocco (recently arrived)	M